تفسیر انوار البیان

4

ILLUMINATING DISCOURSES
on the
NOBLE QURAN

TAFSIR ANWARUL BAYAN

By
Mufti Muhammad Aashiq Elahi Muhajir Madani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

DARUL-ISHAAT
Karachi-Pakistan.

Revised Edition
تفسير انوار البيان

ILLUMINATING DISCOURSES
ON THE
NOBLE QURAN

TAFSIR ANWARUL BAYAN

By: Mufti Muhammad Aashiq Elahi Muhajir Madani رحمة الله عليه

Volume Four
Part VII & VIII
Para Nineteen to Para Twenty Six

Translation Edited By
Mufti Afzal Hussain Elias

Revised By
Maulana Muhammad Arshad Fakhri
based on *Ma'ariful Quran*

DARUL ISHAAT
Urdu Bazar, Karachi

Contents

Part Nineteen

S.No.	Suject	Page

Surah 27 : Al-Naml

Part Twenty

S.No.	Suject	Page

Surah 28 : Al-Qasas

Surah 29 : Al-Ankabut

S.No.	Suject	Page

Part Twenty-One

S.No.	Suject	Page

Surah 30 : Ar-Rūm

Surah 31 : Luqman

Surah 32 : As-Sajdah

Surah 33 : Al-Ahzab

S.No.	Suject	Page

Part Twenty Two

S.No.	Suject	Page

Surah 34 : Saba

Surah 35 : Fatir

Surah 36 : Yā-Sin

S.No.	Suject	Page

Part Twenty Three

Surah 37 : As Sāffāt

Surah 38 : Sād

Surah 39 : Zumar

S.No.	Suject	Page

Part Twenty Four

Surah 40 : Al-Mumin

S.No.	Suject	Page

Surah 41 : Hāmim Sajdah or Fussilāt

Part Twenty Five

Surah 42 : Ash Shura

Surah 43 : Az-Zukhruf

Surah 44 : Dukhan

Surah 45 : Al-Jāthiyah

Part Twenty Six

Surah 46 : Al-Ahqāf

S.No.	Suject	Page

Surah 47 : Muhammad

Surah 48 : Al Fath

Surah 49 : Al- Hujrāt

S.No.	Suject	Page

Surah 50 : Qāf

Surah 51 : Adh-Dhariyat

PART NINTETEEN

۞ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ أَوْ نَرَىٰ رَبَّنَا ۗ لَقَدِ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْ عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةَ لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ حِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا ﴿٢٢﴾ وَقَدِمْنَآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَـٰهُ هَبَآءً مَّنثُورًا ﴿٢٣﴾ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَيْرٌ مُّسْتَقَرًّا وَأَحْسَنُ مَقِيلًا ﴿٢٤﴾

(21) Those who do not aspire to meet Us say, "Why are angels not sent to us or why do we not see our Lord?" They are certainly proud of themselves and have opted to be extremely rebellious. (22) There shall be no glad tidings for the criminals on that day when they see the angels, and they will shout, "Stay far away!" (23) We will then turn to their deeds and reduce them to scattered dust. (24) The people of Heaven will be in the best of abodes and the best of resting places.

A WARNING TO THE REJECTERS AND GLAD TIDINGS FOR THE PEOPLE OF HEAVEN

Another of the absurd statements made by the disbelievers when they rejected the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, was to say, *"Why are angels not sent to us or why do we not see our Lord?"* They claimed that they would believe only when the angels confirmed the message or when they saw Allāh with their naked eyes.

They made such statements only because they never believed in the Hereafter and had no fear for it. Those who believe in the Hereafter will think over the matter and realise that a person who is so venerable and who has displayed so many miracles cannot be a liar. However, those who are heedless of the Hereafter will not hesitate to make foolish statements to satisfy their obstinacy. Therefore, Allāh attributes the statement to *"Those who do not aspire to meet Us."*

In reply to their demand Allāh says, *"They are certainly proud of themselves and have opted to be extremely rebellious."* They are so haughty that they actually deem themselves fit enough to see Allāh with their naked eyes and that they require witnesses to attest to the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"There shall be no glad tidings for the criminals (the rejecters) on that day when

they see the angels..." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that this day refers to the day when they will die. Other commentators say that it refers to the Day of Judgement. On this day they will finally realise their desire to see the angels, but the occasion will not be very pleasant for them.

They will then be doomed to the eternal punishment of Hell. On that occasion, to be rescued from the punishment, they will shout, *"Stay far away!"* However, this will not help them.

All the good deeds that the disbelievers carried out in this world will not benefit them in the Hereafter because they lacked the qualification of Imān *(Belief)*. Allāh says in Surah Ibrahīm, *"The example of the actions of those who disbelieve in their Lord is like that of ashes that are blown away by a wind on a stormy day. They have absolutely no control of what they earn. This is a distant deviation."* [*Surah 14, verse 18*]

Allāh says here, *"We will then turn to their deeds and reduce them to scattered dust."* The dust referred to in this verse are those microscopic particles of dust that are usually seen in rays of sunlight that filters through tiny holes like air vents. Although they are many in number, but they cannot serve any purpose. Similarly, the deeds of the disbelievers will be of no avail to them in the Hereafter.

After describing the people of hell, Allāh speaks about those of Heaven. He says, *"The people of Heaven will be in the best of abodes and the best of resting places."*

In Surah Kahf Allāh describes heaven as *"A fine reward indeed, and the best of resting-places!"* [*Surah 18, verse 31*]

وَيَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ ٱلسَّمَآءُ بِٱلْغَمَٰمِ وَنُزِّلَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ تَنزِيلًا ﴿25﴾ ٱلْمُلْكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْحَقُّ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ
وَكَانَ يَوْمًا عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَسِيرًا ﴿26﴾ وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ ٱلظَّالِمُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى
ٱتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ ٱلرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ﴿27﴾ يَٰوَيْلَتَىٰ لَيْتَنِى لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا ﴿28﴾ لَّقَدْ أَضَلَّنِى
عَنِ ٱلذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَآءَنِى ۗ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ خَذُولًا ﴿29﴾ وَقَالَ
ٱلرَّسُولُ يَٰرَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِى ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ مَهْجُورًا ﴿30﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِىٍّ
عَدُوًّا مِّنَ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا ﴿31﴾

(25) Call to mind the day when the sky will be rent asunder with clouds and the angels will descend in large numbers. (26) True sovereignty on that day will be exclusive for Rahmān. The day will be very difficult for the disbelievers. (27) The day when the oppressor will bite his hands saying, "If only I had chosen a path with the messenger!" (28) "... Woe to me! If only I had never taken such a person as a friend." (29) "...He has certainly deviated me from remembrance after it had come to me." Shaytān (Satan) always deserts man when he is in need. (30) The messenger will say, "O my Lord! My people have ignored this

Qur'ān." (31) Thus have We appointed from the criminals an enemy for every Prophet. Your Lord suffices as a Guide and a Helper.

THE FRIGHTENING SCENE OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)*, WHEN THE DISBELIEVER WILL WISH THAT HE HAD NOT BEFRIENDED THE WRONG PERSON

Allāh begins to describe the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* by saying, *"Call to mind the day when the sky will be rent asunder with clouds..."* Allāh also describes the splitting of the skies in the opening verses of Surah Infitār (*Surah 82*) and Surah Inshiqāq (*Surah 84*). The author of "Ruhūl Ma'āni" interprets the above verse to mean that the appearance of the clouds will cause the sky to split. Allāh has the power to do this.

He has also mentioned that the verse could be interpreted to mean that when the sky splits, it will appear as if there are clouds there. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه has mentioned that "the sky" refers to all the seven skies, and not only the one above the earth.

"......and the angels will descend in large numbers." Man cannot understand the precise manner in which this shall take place. "Ruhul Ma'āni" has quoted a lengthy narration concerning this verse, but the narration appears to be an "Isrā'īliyāt" (sourced from the Bani Isrā'īl) and cannot be verified.

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that the splitting of the skies will signal the beginning of reckoning. It does not refer to the time when the trumpet will be blown for the first time, causing the destruction of everything.

"True sovereignty on that day will be exclusive for Rahmān." None shall survive as kings and leaders on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. In Surah Mu'min Allāh says that He will announce on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, *"To Whom does all Kingdom belong today? To Allāh, the One, the Omnipotent."* Allāh then says that the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah) "will be very difficult for the disbelievers."*

"The day when the oppressor will bite his hands saying, 'If only I had chosen a path with the messenger!'" "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that whenever the polytheist, Uqba bin Abi Mu'īt returned from a journey, he would invite all the people of Makkah for a feast. He enjoyed the company of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and would associate with him very much.

On one occasion, he again invited the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم after returning from a journey. However, The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم told him that he refused to accept his invitation until he testified to *"Lā ilāha IllAllāh"* and that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was Allāh's messenger. When he invited the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم for the second time, he received the same reply. He eventually recited the Kalimah.

When Ubayy bin Khalaf heard about this, he immediately came to Uqba asking him, "Have you become a heretic?" Uqba replied, "I have not become a heretic by heart. What happened was that a person came to my house and refused to accept my invitation to partake of meals until I said what he requested me to say. Since I do not like any person to leave my house without eating, I said what he bade me to say and he ate."

Ubayy told him, "I shall never be pleased with you until you revile this person." Consequently, he behaved extremely rudely towards the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that he would be slain when he meets the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم outside Makkah. This came to pass when he was killed in the battle of Badr.

The *"oppressor"* in the above verse refers to Uqba, when, on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, he will lament severing ties with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He will say further, *"Woe to me! If only I had never taken such a person (Ubayy bin Khalaf) as a friend. He has certainly deviated me from remembrance (of Allāh, the advices given by the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *and the Qur'ān) after it had come to me."* The person whom he took as a friend turned out to be his worst enemy.

"Satan (Shaytān) always deserts man when he is in need." This sentence may either be a continuation of the statement made the "oppressor" mentioned above, or it may be a statement of Allāh, warning mankind of Satan's *(Shaytān's)* treachery. Satan *(Shaytān)* misleads man to commit disbelief and all types of sins. However, when man requires his assistance, Shaytān always leave him in the lurch, betraying his loyalty.

Some commentators have mentioned that the *"oppressor"* refers to any disbeliever, while *"such a person"* refers to Satan *(Shaytān)*. They say this because the words of the verse are general and not specific.

When the disbelievers will lament their union with the other disbelievers and wish that they had rather befriended Allāh's messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, he will testify against them saying, *"O my Lord! My people have ignored this Qur'ān"* Therefore, the disbelievers and polytheists will be condemned to Hell by their own confession, as well as by the testimony of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The general context of the verse will also include those so-called Muslims who are in senior government positions and who not only transgress Allāh's laws in the Qur'ān, but, in their legislation, give preference to the disbelievers laws over Qur'ānic laws. Some even stoop to the extent of labelling Islāmic laws as being barbaric and cruel.

Commentators mention that the plight described in the verse will also face those Muslims who do not recite the Qur'ān at all as well as those who recite the Qur'ān but who never touch it at all and never look into it when reciting.

"Thus have We appointed from the criminals an enemy for every Prophet." Every Prophet عليه السلام had enemies. However, this fact should not cause any distress because *"Your Lord suffices as a Guide and a Helper. "Allāh will always be there to assist His Prophets* عليهم السلام*."*

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْءَانُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَٰلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِۦ فُؤَادَكَ
وَرَتَّلْنَٰهُ تَرْتِيلًا (32) وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَٰكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا (33) الَّذِينَ
يُحْشَرُونَ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ أُولَٰٓئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا (34)

(32) The disbelievers say, "Why is the entire Qur'ān not revealed to him at once?" We have revealed it in this manner so that your heart may be strengthened by it, and We have revealed it gradually. (33) Whenever they pose ridiculous questions to you, We reveal the precise reply to you with explicit clarity. (34) Those who shall be resurrected on their faces will certainly be in the worst of predicaments and most deviated from the path.

THE WISDOM BEHIND THE GRADUAL REVELATION OF THE QUR'ĀN

Among the numerous preposterous arguments raised by the polytheists is the one that asks. *"Why is the entire Qur'ān not revealed to him at once?"* They fail to understand that Allāh reserves the right to reveal His book as He pleases.

Allāh then also gives a reason for the piecemeal revelation of the Qur'ān by saying, *"We have revealed it in this manner so that your heart may be strengthened by it...* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 19 p.15*) writes that the gradual revelation facilitated ease in memorising and in understanding the Qur'ān.

The repetitive descent of Jibr'īl عليه السلام also served to strengthen the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم resolve against the persistent onslaught of the disbelievers. The gradual revelation also facilitated the understanding of those verses that were abrogated. In addition, it allowed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to present decisive replies to the many arguments of the disbelievers. The appropriate verses were always revealed on the right occasions, thereby affording strength of resolve and consolation to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This repetitive effect would not have been achieved if the Qur'ān was revealed all at once. Besides these, there are still many more reasons for the Qur'ān's piecemeal revelation.

".....and We have revealed it gradually." 'Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, who interprets this part of the verse to mean that the Qur'ān was revealed very clearly and slowly in pauses. It therefore took 23 years before being revealed fully.

Thereafter, Allāh further strengthens the resolve of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, *"Whenever they pose ridiculous questions to you, We reveal the precise reply to you with explicit clarity."* These replies put an effective end to their arguments and criticisms.

Allāh then describes the plight of the disbelievers when He says, *"Those who shall be resurrected on their faces will certainly be in the worst of predicaments and most deviated from the path."* They never believed that they would face these circumstances when they were warned in this world. However, in the Hereafter they will experience the truth of what they were told.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ وَجَعَلْنَا مَعَهُۥٓ أَخَاهُ هَـٰرُونَ وَزِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾ فَقُلْنَا ٱذْهَبَآ
إِلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا فَدَمَّرْنَـٰهُمْ تَدْمِيرًا ﴿٣٦﴾ وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ لَّمَّا كَذَّبُوا۟
ٱلرُّسُلَ أَغْرَقْنَـٰهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَـٰهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ ءَايَةً ۖ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّـٰلِمِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٣٧﴾

وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَا وَأَصْحَٰبَ ٱلرَّسِّ وَقُرُونًۢا بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٨﴾ وَكُلًّا ضَرَبْنَا لَهُ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلَ ۖ وَكُلًّا تَبَّرْنَا تَتْبِيرًا ﴿٣٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَتَوْا۟ عَلَى ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلَّتِىٓ أُمْطِرَتْ مَطَرَ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۚ أَفَلَمْ يَكُونُوا۟ يَرَوْنَهَا ۚ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَرْجُونَ نُشُورًا ﴿٤٠﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْكَ إِن يَتَّخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُوًا أَهَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى بَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ رَسُولًا ﴿٤١﴾ إِن كَادَ لَيُضِلُّنَا عَنْ ءَالِهَتِنَا لَوْلَآ أَن صَبَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ حِينَ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْعَذَابَ مَنْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ أَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ أَفَأَنتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾ أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۖ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٤﴾

(35) Verily We gave the Book to Mūsa and made his brother Hārūn a minister to him. (36) We then said, "The two of you should go to the nation that denies Our signs. Thereafter We completely annihilated the nation." (37) And We drowned the people of Nūh when they denied the messengers, making them a lesson to people. We have prepared an excruciating punishment for the oppressors. (38) We also annihilated the Ād, the Thamud, the people of the well and numerous nations between them. (39) We have coined similitude's for each of them and demolished each one of them. (40) These people have certainly passed the town that was showered by a devastating rain. Have they not Seen it? Nay, but they do not aspire for resurrection. (41) When they see you they seek only to ridicule you (by saying), "Has Allāh sent him as a messenger?" (42) ".... He would have led us away from our gods if we had not persevered with them." Shortly, when they see the punishment, they will come to know who has strayed most from the path. (43) Have you seen the one who has taken his whims as a deity? Will you be a guardian over him? (44) Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are merely like animals, but even more astray.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ĀD, THAMUD AND OTHER NATIONS THE EVIL PLIGHT OF THE IDOLATERS

The above verses speak of the annihilation of the previous nations after they denied the Prophets عليهم السلام and the message brought by them. All these are cited as lessons for those who recite the Qur'ān. Allāh first makes mention of how the people of Fir'aun and the nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام were drowned in this very world. Concerning their plight in the Hereafter, Allāh says, *"We have prepared an excruciating punishment for the oppressors."*

"We also annihilated the Ād, the Thamud, the people of the well and numerous nations between them. We have coined similitudes for each of them (so that they may be guided by these. However, they refused to accept the truth so We sent Our punishment to them) and demolished each one of them."

Referring to the cities of the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"These people (the Polytheists of Makkah) have certainly passed the town that was showered by a devastating rain."* These cities were overturned when they engaged

in the vile deed of sodomy. Thereafter, their cities suffered a shower of stones from the skies. The details of this incident have been given in Surah A'rāf [*Error! Bookmark not defined.*] and in Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verse 77-83*].

The polytheists of Makkah passed by the ruins of Sodom twice annually en route to Shām (*Syria*) for trade purposes. However, they failed to learn any lesson from what they saw. Allāh says in Surah Sāffāt. *"You pass by them in the mornings and at nights. Do you not understand?"* The above verse of Surah Furqān mentions the singular word "town" even though these were a few cities. A singular word has been used because it may refer to the main town from these or it could refer to all collectively (as is possible in the Arabic language).

"Have they not seen it? Nay, but they do not aspire for resurrection." The Polytheists have been forewarned and can see the consequences of disobedience before them. However, they do not believe in the Hereafter and regard the ruin of the previous nations as mere natural occurrences.

The truth about the *'people of the well"* cannot be verified beyond doubt. One opinion cited in "Ruhul Ma'āni" states that they were the descendants of the Thamud and lived in Yamamah. Others say that these people lived in the vicinity of a well in Antioch.

Another opinion says that they were idol worshippers who lived in an area that had many wells and they possessed an abundance of livestock. Sayyidina Shu'ayb رضی الله عنه was sent to preach them, but they were rebellious and caused him much pain and suffering. It then transpired that they were all gathered once around a well that had recently been dug and which was not yet completed. Allāh caused the ground to collapse beneath them, causing them all to be buried alive.

Other commentators maintain that the *"people of the well"* were the same people described as the "people of the trench," who will be discussed in Surah Burūj (*Surah 85*), Insha Allāh.

Allāh then discusses the rebelliousness of the Quraysh. Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that *"When they see you they seek only to ridicule you (by saying), 'Has Allāh sent him as a messenger?"'*

This statement resembles what the Thamud said to Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام. They said, *"Has a revelation come only to him from among all of us?"* Such statements are based on ignorance because none can question Allāh's choice when appointing Prophet عليه السلام. Allāh replies to them in Surah An'ām. when He says, *"Allāh knows best where He wishes to place His message."* (i.e. with whom He wished to entrust it).

People need to ponder about and deliberate over the message brought to them by the Prophets عليهم السلام. They need not question the messenger. The Polytheists of Makkah were foolish enough to regard their denial of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم message as an achievement. It is for this reason that they said, "He [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *would have led us away from our gods if we had not persevered with them."*

Allāh replies by saying, *"Shortly, when they see the punishment, they will come to know who has strayed most from the path."* In this world they considered the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be astray, but the reality of the situation will be exposed to them in the Hereafter. However, it will then be too late to make amends.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh goes on to say, *"Have you seen the one who has taken his whims as a deity? Will you be a guardian over him? Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are merely like animals, but even more astray."* Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in these verses by telling him that he should not consider it his duty to convert people because he cannot force them into anything.

Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"Without doubt, We have revealed to you a Book with the truth for the people. Whoever is rightly guided, is guided for his benefit, and whoever is misguided, then it is to his own detriment. You have not been sent as a warder over them."* [*Surah 39, verse 41*]

Allāh describes the disbelievers as people who bow to the dictates of their whims just like others bow in submission to their deities. Such people cannot be guided, so one should never hope that they will ever hearken to the truth, nor understand it. They have reached a stage where *"They are merely like animals, but even more astray."*

Animals are not bound to any Shari'ah, so they cannot be criticised for failing to comply with it. People are however constricted to the limitations fixed by the Shari'ah. Therefore, if they fail to comply, they will be regarded as worse than even the animals.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the animals realise that they have to be obedient to their masters and even recognise those who are good to them and those who are not. They know where to eat and sleep, know where to gain benefit and which places and occasions to shun when they anticipate harm.

However, man does not realise that he has to obey his Creator, Master and Sustainer. He does not recognise that Allāh is good to him but he rather follows the dictates of his whims. He does not hasten to do good, which is of benefit to him, but rather continues to sin without perceiving the devastating consequences. The disbeliever is therefore worse than the animals.

"Or do you think that most of them hear or understand?" the author of "Ruhūl Ma'āni" says that the word *"most of them"* is used in this verse because there are those Disbelievers who are destined to believe.

The foregoing verses warn man that he is headed for destruction if he follows the dictates of his carnal self because this will plunge him into the abyss of sin. Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I fear most that my Ummah will follow their whims and entertain lengthy hopes, causing them to forget the Hereafter." [*"Mishkāt" p. 444*]

Another hadith cites the following three factors as being most destructive. (1) Following the dictates of the carnal self, (2) miserliness and (3) pride, which is the most serious of the three. [*"Mishkāt" p. 434*]

Although it is the trait of the disbelievers to pander to the wishes of one's

carnal self, many Muslims are also guilty of the same crime. They shun the clear teachings of the Qur'ān and Ahadīth, and fabricate their own teachings, some of which lead them to disbelief. Some of these people say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had knowledge of the unseen, while others claim that he was not a human. There are also those foolish ones who claim that the Qur'ān was altered and that the vast majority of the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم were disbelievers (Allāh forbid!).

These beliefs have been formulated as a result of worshipping the carnal self (the nafs). There are also many people who carry out certain irreligious practices in the name of Islām. These are all heretic practices that are perpetrated greatly during the months of Muharram, Rabī'ul Awwal, Rajab and Sha'bān.

Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has enumerated many of these in his book "Islāhur Rusūm". These are common in many Muslim regions because they do not require any sanction because of their fallacious and spurious nature.

I (the author of this Tafsīr) was once travelling in the southern part of India, when I happened to be sitting in a Masjid with the Imām. After the Zuhr Adhān had finished, I heard drums being beaten. When I asked the Imām about it, he replied that they beat the drums to inform the women that Adhān was over. I asked him, "Did such a practice take place during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم When he replied in the negative, I asked him why then did they innovate such a practice in the Religion.

I also discovered that the people in that region would not remove any corpse from a house until the family of the deceased distributed sweet roties among the people.

On one of my journeys to Damascus I heard the Mu'adhin (the person who calls out the Adhān) recited Durūd [salutations on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] loudly before calling out the Adhān. The people there also recited Durūd loudly when they saw the Imām mounting the pulpit on a Friday. They continue to do so until he is properly seated upon the pulpit.

There are many such heretic practices throughout the world. When people are told about these, they begin to argue and present fabricated proofs to substantiate their actions. In this way they refute the Qur'ān and Ahadīth. This is clearly because of their submission to the dictates of their carnal self *(nafs)*.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ ٱلظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَآءَ لَجَعَلَهُۥ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا ٱلشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ
دَلِيلًا ﴿45﴾ ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَٰهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا ﴿46﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا
وَٱلنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ نُشُورًا ﴿47﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشْرًۢا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ
رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً طَهُورًا ﴿48﴾ لِّنُحْۦِىَ بِهِۦ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا وَنُسْقِيَهُۥ مِمَّا
خَلَقْنَآ أَنْعَٰمًا وَأَنَاسِىَّ كَثِيرًا ﴿49﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَٰهُ بَيْنَهُمْ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا۟ فَأَبَىٰٓ أَكْثَرُ ٱلنَّاسِ

(45) Do you not see how your Lord spreads the shadow. If He willed, He could have made it stationary. We then appoint the sun as a sign to it. (46).... Then We gradually withdraw it towards Ourselves. (47) Allāh is the One Who has made the night as a garment, has made sleep a form of rest and has made the day a time to spread out. (48) He is the One Who sends the winds as a conveyer of glad tidings ahead of His mercy. And He sends from the skies water that purifies. (49) "... So that We revive dead land with it and so that We give drinking water to Our creation from the animals and many people. (50) We have certainly distributed it between them so that they take heed, but most people wish only to be ungrateful. (51) If We willed, We would have sent a warner to every village. (52) So do not follow the disbelievers and staunchly oppose them with it.

A MANIFESTATION OF ALLĀH'S MIGHT IN THE SHADOW, THE SUN, THE MOON, THE WINDS AND THE RAIN

Allāh begins by saying, *"Do you not see how your Lord spreads the shadow. If He willed, He could have made it stationary."* It is commonly observed that shadows are long when the sun rises. Allāh has the might to make the shadow remain that length even as the sun moves across the sky.

"We then appoint the sun as a sign to it. Then We gradually withdraw it towards Ourselves." Allāh has made the moving of the sun as a sign by which the lengths of shadows vary. As the sun moves across the sky, shadows diminish until midday. Thereafter, they begin to grow until sunset. Even though it appears as if the sun causes the variation' in shadow lengths, it is actually Allāh Who is controlling everything.

Allāh then continues to say, *"Allāh is the One Who has made the night as a garment (because it conceals everything), has made sleep a form of rest..."* After a day of work, people usually sleep at night to replenish their strength. The darkness of the night is conducive to sound sleep, whereas sleeping during the day is usually possible only when darkness is created by drawing curtains, etc.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that sleep is the sister of death. It is for this reason that Allāh describes the day as a *"time to spread out."* The Arabic word "nushūra" (translated above as *"time to spread out"*) is normally used for resurrection on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. During the day, people spread out on earth to perform their various tasks.

Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"Because of His mercy, He (Allāh) has created the day and the night for you so that you may find peace in them, seek from His bounty, and express your gratitude to Him."* [*Surah 28, verse 73*]

Since sleep resembles death, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite the following prayer *(du'ā)* before sleeping:

[TRANSLATION: "O Allāh! With Your name do I die and rise up."]

WHEN AWAKENING, HE USED TO RECITE:

[TRANSLATION: "All praise be to Allāh, Who has granted us life after causing our deaths, and to Him shall Our return be."]

Allāh then describes the bounty of rain when He says, *"He is the One Who sends the winds as a conveyer of glad tidings ahead of His mercy."* When people feel the winds that precede rain, they have sufficient time to keep those things under cover that should not get wet.

Allāh then mentions three benefits of rain. The first is that rainwater is *"water that purifies."* People are able to cleanse themselves and other things with water. People are able to bath, make ablution *(wudhu)*, wash clothes, etc with this water. No other liquid can replace water for this purpose.

The second benefit is that Allāh *"revive dead land with it."* As a result, the land flourishes with vegetation that is eaten by man and animal alike. Allāh mentions that the third benefit is that He gives *"drinking water to Our creation from the animals and many people."*

"We have certainly distributed it (rain) *between them so that they take heed, but most people wish only to be ungrateful."* Allāh sends varying amounts and degrees of rain to different parts of the world, but people are ungrateful for this.

Man's ingratitude often leads him to disbelief. He eats and drinks from what Allāh has provided, yet worships others. Sinning and disobeying Allāh also amounts to ingratitude.

"If We willed, We would have sent a warner to every village." In this way, The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم task would have been lightened. However, Allāh willed that he be blessed with the noble mantle of being the final Prophet to the entire mankind.

The disbelievers left no stone unturned to oppose the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from every front. However, Allāh advises him not to falter in the least, but tells him that he should *"not follow the disbelievers and staunchly oppose them with it* (i.e. with the Qur'ān)."

وهو الذي مرج البحرين هذا عذب فرات وهذا ملح أجاج وجعل بينهما برزخا وحجرا محجورا ﴿53﴾ وهو الذي خلق من الماء بشرا فجعله نسبا وصهرا وكان ربك قديرا ﴿54﴾

(53) It is He Who has merged two seas, the one being sweet and quenching, while the other is salty and bitter. He has created between them a barrier that acts as an impregnable veil. (54) It is He Who has created man from water and has appointed for him relatives by blood and relatives by marriage. Your Lord is Ever Powerful.

ALLĀH'S POWER IS DISPLAYED BY THE MERGING OF TWO CONTRASTING WATERS THAT DO NOT MIX

The above verses describe two more manifestations of Allāh's greatness, both of which are witnessed daily. Allāh begins by saying, *"It is He Who has merged two seas, the one being sweet and quenching, while the other is salty and bitter. He has created between them a (invisible) barrier that acts as an impregnable veil."*

Allāh says in Surah Rahmān, *"Between the two* (waters) *is a barrier so that the two do not transgress i.e. do not trespass their limits."* Although no apparent barrier can be seen, Allāh's power causes the two water masses not to mingle. In this manner, each water body maintains its own properties and characteristics.

Allāh has created everything with their own peculiarities, and they all function accordingly. However, they may function contrary to their inherent characteristics when Allāh wills. An example of this was when the fire did not burn Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Another example is that the waters of the various seas and rivers do not mix when Allāh does not allow them to.

In his Tafsīr, Sayyidina Maulana Shabbir Uthmāni رحمة الله عليه quotes from "Bayānul Qur'ān" that two reliable Bangali Ulema *(Scholars)* testified to the fact that the river running between Arkān and Chātgām has two distinctly discernable types of water. Even from a distance it can be noticed that the one type of water is white, while the other is black.

They say that the black water resembles the water of the ocean because of its turbulent nature, having waves crashing to and fro. On the other hand, the white water is completely calm and boats travel in it. Both these waters flow side by side, yet they never mix. People say that white water is sweet, while the black water is salty.

I (the author of this Tafsīr) have heard from the students of a district in India called Bārisāl that two tributaries emerging from the same river have different water types. The water of the one tributary is extremely bitter and salty, while that of the other is extremely pleasant and sweet.

Many reliable people of Dhabel (near Surat, India) have told me (the author) that, during certain seasons, when the seawater enters the rivers of the area, the two waters never mix. While the seawater flows strongly on the surface, the river water remains at the bottom. The verse of the Qur'ān is strongly substantiated by these eyewitness accounts.

Another interpretation of the verse is that Allāh has created the various water bodies on earth to flow in their respective locations. They are all separated by landmasses and are not allowed to mix with each other, thereby destroying everything in between. At the same time, they maintain their own properties. It has never occurred that sweet water turned salty, nor vice versa.

Another exposition of Allāh's power is that He *"has created man from water and has appointed for him relatives by blood and relatives by marriage..."i.e.* Allāh created man from a drop of semen. Allāh has created sexual passion in humans, which they satisfy by marrying and begetting children. The marriage also joins families together and every person thus has two families – his mother's and his father's.

Allāh fosters love between these families, who continue to expand and grow as they marry into other families. Allāh has mentioned just these few signs of His power and then says, *"Your Lord is Ever Powerful."* He has created many more things that no other can ever hope to match.

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَلَا يَضُرُّهُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱلْكَافِرُ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ ظَهِيرًا
﴿٥٥﴾ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٥٦﴾ قُلْ مَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِلَّا مَن
شَآءَ أَن يَتَّخِذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ سَبِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱلْحَىِّ ٱلَّذِى لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ
بِحَمْدِهِۦ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَا فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۚ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ فَسْـَٔلْ بِهِۦ خَبِيرًا ﴿٥٩﴾ وَإِذَا
قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ قَالُوا۟ وَمَا ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ أَنَسْجُدُ لِمَا تَأْمُرُنَا وَزَادَهُمْ نُفُورًا ۩ ﴿٦٠﴾
تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَٰجًا وَقَمَرًا مُّنِيرًا ﴿٦١﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى
جَعَلَ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً لِّمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا ﴿٦٢﴾

(55) Besides Allāh they worship things that do not benefit them, nor harm them. The disbeliever was ever opposed to his Lord. (56) We have sent you only as a conveyer of glad tidings and a warner. (57) Say, I do not ask you for any remuneration except for the person who wishes to tread a path towards his Lord. (58) Rely only on The Living, Who cannot die and glorify His praises. Allāh suffices as the Knower of His bondsmen's sins. (59) It was He Who created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between them in six days, and then rose to the Throne. He is the Most Merciful, so enquire about Him from one who is knowledgeable. (60) When they are told, "Prostrate to Rahmān," they say, "What is Rahmān? Should we prostrate to what you command us?" Their hatred then only increases. (61) Blessed is the Being Who created gigantic stars in the sky and placed the sun and the luminous moon in it. (62) It is He Who has appointed the night and the day in succession for the one who intends to take heed or who intends to be grateful

ALLĀH CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH IN SIX DAYS, AND MADE DAY AND NIGHT SUCCESSORS TO EACH OTHER

Allāh depicts the foolishness of the Polytheists when He says, *"Besides Allāh they worship things that do not benefit them, nor harm them. The disbeliever was ever opposed to his Lord."* i.e. he behaves as if he is opposed to Allāh because he carries out the deeds that displease Allāh the most.

The Arabic word "dhahīra" (translated above as *"opposed to "*) actually refers to an aide or ally. However, when it is used with the conjunction "alā" it would be translated as "an aide against" someone (thus giving the meaning of an

opponent).

The verse applies to all the disbelievers. They are constantly plotting against Islām and are allies of Satan *(Shaytān)*. They are also allied to each other against the Muslims, irrespective of their religious denominations.

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"We have sent you only as a conveyer of glad tidings and a warner."* His duty was to propagate the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*. Allāh exhorts the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to grieve if anyone rejected the message, for he could not force anyone to believe.

Allāh then instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"Say, I do not ask you for any remuneration except for (the fact that I want to see) the person who wishes to tread a path towards his Lord (by accepting Islām)."* There were no ulterior motives behind the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم task. It was therefore necessary that people gave him a hearing and deliberated over his message.

Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further by saying, *"Rely only on The Living* (Allāh), *Who cannot die..."* Only Allāh can alleviate opposition and assist against one's enemies. At the same time, he should fervently *"glorify His praises."* Here the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is commanded never to fail in Praises *(Tasbīh)* and glorification *(Tahmīd)* because these will draw Allāh's assistance and aid in removing difficulties.

"Allāh suffices as the Knower of His bondsmen's sins." Allāh will punish people according to their sins because He knows exactly who opposes His religion and His the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"It was He (Allāh) Who created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between them in six days, and then rose to the Throne..."

The creation of the heavens and the earth in six days is also mentioned in Surah HāMīm Sajdah [*Surah 41, verse 12*].

The pious predecessors and the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم have mentioned that the human mind is incapable of perceiving exactly what is meant by this verse and other such verses, even though the words can be understood. Therefore, we should believe in them and should not pursue their explanation. Refer to the commentary of verse *54* of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*) for further details.

When someone asked Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه the meaning of this verse, be broke out in a sweat. After a period of silence, he said, "The meaning of the word is known, the interpretation is beyond understanding, belief in it is compulsory and questioning it is an innovation." He then told the questioner, "It seems to me that you are a deviant person." Thereafter he removed him from the gathering. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 2 p. 165*]

"He (Who has been described above) *is the Most Merciful so enquire about Him from one who is knowledgeable."* Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to learn more about His attributes from Allāh Himself, or from Jibr'īl عليه السلام, or the scholars of the previous divine scriptures.

"When they are told, 'Prostrate to Rahmān;' they say (because of their obstinacy

and ignorance), *'What is Rahmān? Should we prostrate to what you command us?"* Their arrogance and rebelliousness do not permit them to listen to any other. Therefore Allāh says, *"Their hatred then only increases."* Instead of drawing closer, they grow more distant.

"Blessed is the Being Who created gigantic stars in the sky and placed the sun and the luminous moon in it. It is He Who has appointed the night and the day in succession for the one who intends to take heed or intends to be grateful." Allāh draws man's attention to the fact that He created everything in the universe and that man should derive a lesson from all of this. By viewing the greatness of the creation, he should learn that Allāh is even Greater and the True Deity.

وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ ٱلْجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُوا۟
سَلَٰمًا ﴿63﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَٰمًا ﴿64﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
ٱصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا ﴿65﴾ إِنَّهَا سَآءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا
وَمُقَامًا ﴿66﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا۟ وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا۟ وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ قَوَامًا
﴿67﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا
بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿68﴾ يُضَٰعَفْ لَهُ ٱلْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِۦ مُهَانًا ﴿69﴾ إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَٰلِحًا
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ ٱللَّهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ حَسَنَٰتٍ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿70﴾ وَمَن تَابَ
وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَإِنَّهُۥ يَتُوبُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَتَابًا ﴿71﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ ٱلزُّورَ وَإِذَا
مَرُّوا۟ بِٱللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا۟ كِرَامًا ﴿72﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا۟
عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا ﴿73﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ
أَعْيُنٍ وَٱجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿74﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ ٱلْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا۟
وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَٰمًا ﴿75﴾ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا حَسُنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا ﴿76﴾
قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا۟ بِكُمْ رَبِّى لَوْلَا دُعَآؤُكُمْ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًۢا ﴿77﴾

(63) Rahmān's bondsmen are those who walk on earth in humility and, when the ignorant talk to them, they (excuse themselves) saying, "Peace." (64) Those who spend the night in prostrating and standing before their Lord. (65) Those who say, "O our Lord! Avert the punishment of Hell from us. Verily its punishment is devastating indeed!" (66) "It is surely an evil residence and

abode." (67) Those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor miserly, but are rather stationed in moderation between the two (extremes). (68) Those who do not call to another deity with Allāh, who only kill a soul forbidden by Allāh with a warrant, and who do not fornicate. Whoever perpetrates these shall meet with a grave punishment... (69) Punishment will be multiplied for him on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) and he shall remain disgraced therein forever... (70) "...... Save for those who repent, believe and perform good deeds. For such people Allāh will convert their sins into good deeds. Allāh is Ever Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (71) Whoever repents and performs good deeds has certainly turned to Allāh in earnestness. (72) And those who do not engage in acts of deceit and, when they pass by frivolous acts, they pass by gracefully. (73) Those who, when they are reminded by the verses of their Lord, do not fall down deaf and blind. (74) Those who say, "O our Lord! Accord to us the coolness of our eyes from our spouses and children, and make us leaders of the pious." (75) These people, because of their steadfastness, shall be rewarded with balconies, where they will receive prayers of eternal life and peace. (76) They will abide therein forever. It is surely a beautiful residence and abode. (77) Say, "My Lord would not concern Himself with you if it had not been for your supplication. You have surely denied and the consequences will shortly be realised.'

A DESCRIPTION OF ALLĀH'S TRUE BONDSMEN

Allāh accords to the pious Believers *(Mu'minīn)* the venerable title of, *"Rahmān's bondsmen."* This is the first description of the pious men. Although all of mankind are Allāh's slaves, this title is used for those who willingly devote themselves to Allāh's worship with conviction and sincerity. The title of being Allāh's slave is the highest honour that any person can achieve. It is with this title that Allāh describes His noblest of creation, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, when He says, *"Pure is that Being Who transported His slave by night from Masjidul Harām to Masjidul Aqsa..."* [*Surah Bani Isrā'īl (17), verse 1*]

Allāh describes them further by saying that they are *"those who walk on earth in humility. .."*i.e. without pride and arrogance. Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"And do not walk haughtily on earth. You can certainly not cleave the earth, nor can you reach the mountains in height."* [*Surah 17, verse 37*]

The third description given of them is that *"when the ignorant talk to them, they (excuse themselves) saying, 'Peace. "* When the ignorant want to begin an argument with them, they excuse themselves and take leave, greeting them with "Salām" (*"Peace"*).

Allāh says in Surah Qasas , *"When they hear futility, they turn away from it saying, 'Our deeds are ours and your deeds are yours. We greet you with peace. We do not' wish to converse with the ignorant.'"* In the same strain, Allāh says' in verse 72 of Surah Furqān, *"when they pass by frivolous acts, they pass by gracefully."*

They are people who do not waste their time arguing with the ignorant and never reply to their harsh and rude words. They keep themselves aloof from the frivolous pastimes of others. This is the typical behaviour of noble and upright people.

Allāh then describes the fourth quality when he says that they are *"Those who spend the night in prostrating and standing before their Lord.* "Their perpetual worship does not permit them to sleep at nights.

Allāh says in Surah Dhāriyāt, *"Verily the abstinent ones shall be in gardens and springs receiving .what their Lord confers to them. Indeed these people used to carry out good deeds before. Little was it that they slept at night and during the closing portions of the night they would be seeking forgiveness (from Allāh)."* [*Surah 51, verses 15-18*]

Allāh then mentions their fifth attribute when he says that they are *"Those who say, 'O our Lord! Avert the punishment of Hell from us. Verily its punishment is devastating indeed! It is surely an evil residence and abode."* Although the real meaning of the word *"gharāma"* (translated above as "devastating") is 'incumbent' and 'binding,' the above translation has been made because when punishment becomes incumbent on a person, it will surely annihilate him. Allāh's pious bondsmen carry out good deeds, refrain from sins and also seek Allāh's refuge from punishment.

Allāh says in Surah Mu'minūn, *"...those who spend of what they have been granted and whose hearts tremble because they have to return to their Lord."* i.e. they are worried whether their deeds with be accepted or not.

"Those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor miserly, but are rather stationed in moderation between the two -(extremes)." The Shari'ah encourages moderation in all matters. Just as it is not permissible to spend Lawful *(Halāl)* wealth in unlawful *(Harām)* avenues, it is equally not permissible to spend it wastefully in Lawful *(Halāl)* avenues.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that moderation in spending is half of a good livelihood. In other words, working to earn a Lawful *(Halāl)* livelihood is one half of a good livelihood, and the other half will be achieved when this earned wealth is spent with moderation on oneself, one's family, parents and the needy.

Only those people may spend all their wealth for Allāh's pleasure who have complete reliance on Allāh and who will not be affected in any way when spending in this manner. An example of such a person was Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه. He spent everything he had on the military expedition to Tabūk. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him what he left for his family, he replied, "I have left Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with them (i.e. the pleasure of Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is sufficient for them)." [*"Mishkāt" p.* 556]

Allāh then mentions the sixth quality of His sincere bondsmen. He says that they are *"Those who do not call to another deity with Allāh..."* i.e. they are not Polytheists, and adhere fast to oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*.

Allāh continues to describe the seventh and eighth qualities when he says that they are those who *"only kill a soul forbidden by Allāh with a warrant, and who do not fornicate."* They will kill another person only if it is proven that he murdered another, turned apostate, or committed adultery as a married person. In each of these cases they will be acting in conformance with the Shari'ah.

"Whoever perpetrates these shall meet with a grave punishment..." Certain commentators have mentioned that the Arabic word "athāma (translated above as "a grave punishment") is another name for Hell.

"Punishment will be multiplied for him on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) and he shall remain disgraced therein forever..." This verse describes the punishment of a disbeliever because only the disbelievers will dwell forever in Hell.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that someone asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "What is the worst sin?" "That you ascribe partners to Allāh, whereas Allāh created you," was the reply. When the person asked to know which sin followed, the reply was, "That you kill your children fearing that they will share your food (for fear of poverty)."

"Which sin comes next?" he asked. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That you commit adultery with your neighbour's wife." (Although adultery is always unlawful *(Harām)*, it will be worse when committed with a one's neighbour's wife). It was then that Allāh revealed the verse *"Those who do not call to another deity with Allāh, who only kill a soul forbidden by Allāh with a warrant, and who do not fornicate."* [*Bukhari p. 701*]

"....Save for those who repent, believe and perform good deeds. For such people Allāh will convert their sins into good deeds. Allāh is Ever Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." This verse makes it clear that the doors of repentance are forever open to the disbelievers as well.

Sayyidina Amr bin Al' Ās رضى الله عنه reports that when he accepted Islām, he told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he will pledge his allegiance to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on condition that Allāh forgives him. Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "O Amr! Do you not know that Islām destroys all (sins) before it?" [*Muslim v. 1 p. 76*]

In the interpretation of the above verse, 'Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* Allāh will instruct that the minor sins of a person be presented before him, while the major sins be kept aside. When he is asked if he committed these sins, he will admit to them all, fearing that he will not be able to reply for the major sins that are still pending. Allāh will then command that all his sins be converted to good deeds."

"The person will then say, 'But there are still many more sins that I do not see here.' (He will say this in anticipation that these will also be converted to good deeds)." Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه says that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said this part, he smiled, causing his blessed teeth to be seen. [*"Mishkāt" p. 92*]

This hadith tells us that sins will be forgiven and that an equivalent amount of good deeds will be recorded to the person's name. This interpretation is necessary because no sin can become a virtue. Other commentators say that sins will be forgiven after a person is inspired to repent. They will then be replaced by his future good deeds. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

"Whoever repents and performs good deeds has certainly turned to Allāh in

earnestness." Such a person fears Allāh's punishment, repents sincerely and resolves never to sin again.

Allāh then describes the tenth quality of His bondsmen. Allāh says that they are *"those who do not engage in acts of deceit..."* Acts of deceit refer to all deeds that are contrary to the Shari'ah. Just as everyone understands that sinful deeds are forbidden, it should also be understood that it is also forbidden to be present in gatherings where sins are perpetrated. A Muslim should never go to temples and ceremonies of the polytheists and the disbelievers. They must also refrain from attending places where singing, dancing and drinking liquor takes place, even though they may not be participating.

Being present in such places increases the numbers in attendance, which is also forbidden. Secondly, attending these places causes the heart to darken, to harden, and decreases one's capacity to perform good deeds. Frequenting these places extinguishes all desire for good deeds within one's heart and makes one grow accustomed to sin.

The wedding ceremonies that take place nowadays are infested with sin. Photos, videos, dancing, singing and all other vices pollute the affair, thus making it unlawful *(Harām)* to attend. Muslims should stay far from these functions for the safety of their Imān.

Other commentators have interpreted the above verse to mean that the *"bondsmen of Rahmān"* do not give false evidence and testimony. False testimony is a major sin. In fact, certain Ahadīth state that it is the worst of all sins.

Sayyidina Khuraim bin Fātik رضی الله عنه narrates that once after the Fajr Salāh, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم thrice announced, "Giving false testimony is tantamount to polytheism *(shirk)*!" Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the following verse of Surah Hajj *"So abstain from the impurity of idols and abstain from false talk in a state that you are inclined only towards Allāh, not ascribing any partners to Him."* { *Abu Dawūd* }

".... when they pass by frivolous acts, they pass by gracefully." This is the eleventh quality of the "bondsmen of Rahmān." They detest gatherings in which people indulge in frivolous and futile things. They pass by without giving it a second glance. Even if someone from the gatherings invites them to participate, they ignore the call and hasten by.

"Those who, when they are reminded by the verses of their Lord, do not fall down deaf and blind." They pay heed to the advice of the Qur'ān, exert themselves to understand these, and act accordingly. This is the distinctive quality of all believers *(Mu'minīn)*.

Describing the thirteenth quality, Allāh says that they are *"Those who say, 'O our Lord! Accord to us the coolness of our eyes from our spouses and children...'"* They pray to Allāh to make their spouses and children pious, obedient and a source of comfort and solace for them.

Pious people are just as concerned about the spiritual welfare of their families as they are with their material welfare. They pay attention to the religious education and upbringing of their children. If children are physically

sound and healthy, but lacking in their spiritual welfare, they will be a burden and curse to their parents instead of a blessing.

The *"bondsmen of Rahmān"* also pray to Allāh to make them "leaders of the pious." It is evident that a person can be a leader of the pious only when he himself is pious. The *"bondsmen of Rahmān"* do not only pray for their families, but for themselves as well. They ask Allāh to make them righteous enough so that others may be inspired by their piety and follow suit. This prayer *(du'ā*)teaches us that there is no harm in supplicating to Allāh for spiritual leadership.

After describing the *"bondsmen of Rahmān"* Allāh declares, *"These people, because of their steadfastness, shall be rewarded with balconies..."*

Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"For these people there shall be a double reward on account of what they do, and they shall rest peacefully on balconies."* [*Surah 34, verse 37*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Verily, the people of Heaven will gaze towards the higher balconies just as you look towards the stars that are far past the easterly and westerly horizons. This difference will be because of the difference in ranks." The Sahābah رضى الله عنهم asked, "These must be the ranks of the Prophets عليهم السلام. None will be able to reach their ranks."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I swear by the Being in Whose control lies my life! These will be those who believe in Allāh and in the Prophets عليهم السلام." [*Bukhari p. 461*]

Sayyidina Abu Mālik Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that there are balconies in Heaven, the inside of which can be seen from outside and vice versa. These are reserved for those people who speak softly, feed others, fast often and perform Salāh by night while others are asleep.

Allāh continues to Say that in Heaven, the *"bondsmen of Rahmān"* will *"will receive prayers of eternal life* (from the angels) *and peace."* The angels will also greet them with salām, as mentioned in Surah Zumar, *"Peace be on you! May you be pleased. Enter therein to abide forever."* [*Surah 39, verse 73*]

Allāh says in the same strain, *"They will abide therein forever. It is surely a beautiful residence and abode."*

"Say, 'My Lord would not concern Himself with you if it had not been for your supplication."' One of the interpretations of this verse is that it is addressed to the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Allāh tells them that if they were not worshipping Him, they would have no value in His estimation.

Allāh then addresses the disbelievers saying, *"You have surely denied, and the consequences will shortly be realised* (when you will be punished)." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه says that the *"consequences"* refers to the battle of Badr, where the disbelievers leaders were killed.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

سورة الشعرآء

Makkan	Surah Ash-Shuara	Verses 227

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

طسٓمٓ ﴿1﴾ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿2﴾ لَعَلَّكَ بَٰخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا۟ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿3﴾
إِن نَّشَأْ نُنَزِّلْ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ ءَايَةً فَظَلَّتْ أَعْنَٰقُهُمْ لَهَا خَٰضِعِينَ ﴿4﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن ذِكْرٍ
مِّنَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ مُحْدَثٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ عَنْهُ مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿5﴾ فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا۟ فَسَيَأْتِيهِمْ أَنۢبَٰٓؤُا۟ مَا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿6﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَمْ أَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿7﴾ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿8﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿9﴾

In the name of Allāh, The Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Tā Sīn Mīm. (2) These are the verses of the Clear Book. (3) It seems like you will destroy yourself because they are not believing. (4) If We willed, We would have revealed a great sign to them from the sky, causing their necks to bow before it in humility. (5) Whenever any new advice from Compassionate (Rahmān) comes to them, they are averse to it. (6) They have certainly denied, so shortly the news of what they used to mock at will come to them. (7) Have they not Seen the earth and how We cause every impeccable species to grow there? (8) There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. (9) Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful.

CONSOLATION FOR THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AND A WARNING FOR THE DISBELIEVERS

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.3 p. 381*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was extremely distressed when the Polytheists refused to accept his message. To console him Allāh revealed the verse, *"It seems like you will destroy yourself because they are not believing."* Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to cause himself so much grief because his duty was merely to convey the message.

"If We willed, We would have revealed a great sign to them from the sky, causing their necks to bow before it in humility." Allāh says in this verse that He could force them all to believe. However, Allāh has granted every person the choice to do as

he pleases because there is no compulsion in religion *(Islām)*.

Describing the attitude of the disbelievers, Allāh says, *"Whenever any new advice from Rahmān comes to them, they are averse to it. They have certainly denied, so shortly the news* (punishment) *of what they used to mock at will come to them."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that the punishment for mockery is described as *"news"* because the disbelievers received the news of this pending punishment in the Qur'ān.

Allāh then describes His creative power when He says, *"Have they not Seen the earth and how We cause every impeccable species to grow in* (from which man and animal eat)? *There is certainly a great sign* (denoting Allāh's greatness and oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*) *in this. However, most of them do not believe."*

"Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful." The disbelievers are warned that Allāh certainly has the might to take them to task for their deeds. However, if they choose to repent and believe it is never too late because Allāh can forgive.

وَإِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبُّكَ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنِ ٱئْتِ ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ (10) قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ أَلَا يَتَّقُونَ (11) قَالَ رَبِّ
إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ (12) وَيَضِيقُ صَدْرِى وَلَا يَنطَلِقُ لِسَانِى فَأَرْسِلْ إِلَىٰ هَٰرُونَ
(13) وَلَهُمْ عَلَىَّ ذَنۢبٌ فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ (14) قَالَ كَلَّا ۖ فَٱذْهَبَا بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ ۖ إِنَّا مَعَكُم
مُّسْتَمِعُونَ (15) فَأْتِيَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَآ إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ (16) أَنْ أَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ (17) قَالَ أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا وَلَبِثْتَ فِينَا مِنْ عُمُرِكَ سِنِينَ (18) وَفَعَلْتَ
فَعْلَتَكَ ٱلَّتِى فَعَلْتَ وَأَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ (19) قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَآ إِذًا وَأَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ
(20) فَفَرَرْتُ مِنكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِى رَبِّى حُكْمًا وَجَعَلَنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ (21) وَتِلْكَ
نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَىَّ أَنْ عَبَّدتَّ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ (22) قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ (23) قَالَ
رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن كُنتُم مُّوقِنِينَ (24) قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥٓ أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ
(25) قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ (26) قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمُ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ
لَمَجْنُونٌ (27) قَالَ رَبُّ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (28) قَالَ لَئِنِ
ٱتَّخَذْتَ إِلَٰهًا غَيْرِى لَأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْمَسْجُونِينَ (29) قَالَ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَىْءٍ مُّبِينٍ
(30) قَالَ فَأْتِ بِهِۦٓ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ (31) فَأَلْقَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِىَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ
(32) وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُۥ فَإِذَا هِىَ بَيْضَآءُ لِلنَّٰظِرِينَ (33)

(10) When your Lord called Mūsa (telling him) "Go to the oppressive nation..."

(11) "... The nation of Fir'aun. Do they not fear Allāh?" (12) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! I fear that they will falsify me." (13) "(And I fear that) my chest would be constricted and that my tongue will not be able to move. So send for Hārūn." (14) "They also have a charge against me and I fear that they will kill me." (15) Allāh said, "Never! The two of you should proceed with Our signs. We are definitely listening well with you two." (16) "Go to Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and tell him, 'We are messengers of the Lord of the universe... (17) "...(bearing the message) that you send the Bani Isrā'īl with us." (18) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "Did we not raise you among us as a newborn child? And did you not live with us for many years of your life?" (19) "You committed the deed that you did and you were ungrateful." (20) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "I did it at that time when I was from the mistaken ones." (21) "I then fled from you people when I feared you. My Lord then conferred wisdom on me and included me among the apostles." (22) "The favour that you remind me of was because you enslaved the Bani Isrā'īl" (23) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "What is the Lord of the universe?" (24) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "The Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two; if you will be convinced." (25) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said to those around him, "Do you hear?" (26) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "He is your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers." (27) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "Indeed your messenger who has been sent to you is certainly insane." (28) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "He is the Lord of the East, the West and whatever is between the two; if you can un derstand." (29) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "If you take another as a deity besides myself, I shall definitely make you of the prisoners!" (30) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "Even if I bring you a clear proof?" (31) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said "Bring it if you are truthful." (32) So Mūsa عليه السلام cast down his staff and it suddenly became a manifest serpent. (33) And he withdrew his hand, which instantly turned white for all to see.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA AND HĀRŪN عليهما السلام CONVERSE WITH PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)*

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was born to a woman of the Bani Isrā'īl who were then living in Egypt. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, the Pharaoh of Egypt, was an arch enemy of the Bani Isrā'īl. He used to kill the sons born to the Bani Isrā'īl and keep the girls in his service. Allāh inspired the mother of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to place him in a basket, which was then cast down a river.

Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* wife found the basket and convinced Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* to adopt the child as his own. However, the child refused to suckle from anyone. Eventually Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام sister told Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* to employ her mother to suckle the child. This was done, thereby allowing Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to be returned to his mother, although temporarily. He grew up in Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* palace until he became a young man.

It once occurred that when assisting a person of the Bani Isrā'īl, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام mistakenly killed a Copt. He was then advised to leave Egypt when the news spread. He then went to Madyan, where he married and lived for ten years as a shepherd.

On his return from Madyan after ten years, he was travelling in the desert, when he saw what appeared to be a fire. Bidding his wife to tarry while he

collected some flames to stoke a fire of their own, or so that he could find a guide, he proceeded to the fire. However, it was really not a fire, and it was there that Allāh made him a Prophet. Allāh then commanded him to preach the message of Tauhīd to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his people.

Allāh told him, *"Go to the oppressive nation, the nation of Pharaoh (Fir'aun). Do they not fear Allāh?' Mūsa* عليه السلام *said, 'O my Lord! I fear that they will falsify me. (And I fear that) my chest would be constricted and that my tongue will not be able to move. So send for Hārūn* (so that he could assist me in the task).

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام continued to beseech Allāh saying, *"They also have a charge against me* (because I killed the Copt) *and I fear that they will kill me."*

Allāh accepted the request of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and made Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام a Prophet as well and said in reply to Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام apprehensions, *"Never!* (They will never be able to kill you) *The two of you should proceed with Our signs. We are definitely listening well with you two. Go to Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and tell him, 'We are messengers of the Lord of the universe (bearing the message) that you send the Bani Isrā'īl with us."*

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام then took Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام with him to pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*. Upon reaching Egypt, they proceeded to convey the message to pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*. Thereupon, *"Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, 'Did we not raise you among us as a newborn child? And did you not live with us for many years of your life? You committed the deed that you did and (by killing the Copt. You were supposed to have been grateful to us for our favours on you. However) you were ungrateful."*

Confessing to his error, *'Mūsa* عليه السلام *said, 'I did it at that time when I was from the mistaken ones. "*'The death of the Copt was a sheer accident. However, the Copts were unforgiving and resolved to execute Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Referring to this, he told pharaoh *(Fir'aun), 'I then fled from you people when I feared you. My Lord then conferred wisdom on me and included me among the apostles."*

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام continued to tell Pharaoh *(Fir'aun), "The favour that you remind me of was because you enslaved the Bani Isrā'īl."* In this brief statement, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام tells pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* that he was forced to raise Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام as a child because of his oppressive behaviour towards the Bani Isrā'īl. If he had not started killing the boys of the Bani Isrā'īl and enslaving the others, Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام mother would not have cast her child into the river. Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* wife would then never have found him and convinced her husband to raise him.

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* reminded Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام of the one person whom he killed by mistake, yet he never thought to mention the thousands that he killed oppressively. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* sought to conceal his atrocities by mentioning his one favour to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* claimed to be the Lord of the universe. Therefore, when Sayyidina Mūsa and Hārūn عليه السلام told him, *'We are the messengers of the Lord of the universe,"* he asked them *"What is the Lord of the universe?"* With the question, he started to interrogate the two messengers so that his courtiers could be satisfied with him. Some questions have also been mentioned in verses 49 to 53 of Surah TāHā (*Surah 20*).

In response to his first question, *"Mūsa* عليه السلام *said,* '(The Lord of the universe is) *The Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two; if you will be convinced."*

Since his courtiers had never heard this before, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* laughingly said to them. *"Do you hear?"* Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام added by saying about Allāh that *"He is your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers."* Dumbstruck by this assertion, all Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* could say to his courtiers was, *"Indeed your messenger who has been sent to you is certainly insane."* Here Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* used the same line against Allāh's Holy Prophets that other nations used to say about the other Prophets عليهم السلام.

"Mūsa عليه السلام *said, 'He is the Lord of the East, the West and whatever is between the two; if you can understand* (then accept what we say)." Adopting the stance of tyrants who are unable to hold their own without using force, *"Fir'oun said, 'If you take another as a deity besides myself I shall definitely make you of the prisoners!'"*

Undeterred by Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* threats, *"Mūsa* عليه السلام *said,* '(Will you imprison me) *Even if I bring you a clear proof?' Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, 'Bring it if you are truthful.*

"So Mūsa عليه السلام *cast down his staff and it suddenly became a manifest serpent. And he withdrew his hand, which instantly turned* (shining) *white for all to see."* These were two of the miracles that Allāh had given to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

Ibn Kathīr *(v. 3 p. 233)* reports that Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام hand shone as bright as a piece of the moon. Thereafter Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* called for his magicians to challenge Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, as will be presently' explained.

قَالَ لِلْمَلَإِ حَوْلَهُۥٓ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسَٰحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿34﴾ يُرِيدُ أَن يُخْرِجَكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُم بِسِحْرِهِۦ
فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿35﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَٱبْعَثْ فِى ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ ﴿36﴾ يَأْتُوكَ
بِكُلِّ سَحَّارٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿37﴾ فَجُمِعَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ لِمِيقَٰتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿38﴾ وَقِيلَ لِلنَّاسِ
هَلْ أَنتُم مُّجْتَمِعُونَ ﴿39﴾ لَعَلَّنَا نَتَّبِعُ ٱلسَّحَرَةَ إِن كَانُوا۟ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿40﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ
قَالُوا۟ لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَئِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا إِن كُنَّا نَحْنُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿41﴾ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذًا لَّمِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ
﴿42﴾ قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰٓ أَلْقُوا۟ مَآ أَنتُم مُّلْقُونَ ﴿43﴾ فَأَلْقَوْا۟ حِبَالَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ وَقَالُوا۟ بِعِزَّةِ
فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ ٱلْغَٰلِبُونَ ﴿44﴾ فَأَلْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِىَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿45﴾
فَأُلْقِىَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿46﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿47﴾ رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿48﴾ قَالَ
ءَامَنتُمْ لَهُۥ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُۥ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱلسِّحْرَ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ
لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَٰفٍ وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿49﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَا ضَيْرَ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ

(34) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said to the ministers around him, "This is certainly a knowledgeable magician." (35) ".....He intends to expel you from your land with his magic. What do you advise?" (36) They replied, "Grant him and his brother respite while you dispatch recruiters to the towns..." (37) "...who will bring every learned magician to you." (38) So the magicians were gathered for an appointment on the specified day. (39) The people were asked, "Have you all gathered?" (40) "Perhaps we should follow the magicians if they emerge as victors." (41) When the magicians came, they asked Pharaoh (Fir'aun), "Shall we receive any prize if we are victorious?" (42) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "Certainly! Then you shall be from those who are close to me." (43) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "Throw what you wish to throw." (44) So they threw their ropes and staffs saying, "By Pharaoh's (Fir'aun's) honour! We shall certainly be the victors!" (45) Then Mūsa threw his staff, which instantly swallowed what they conjured. (46) The magicians were cast down in prostration. (47) They submitted, "We believe in the Lord of the universe... (48) "... in the Lord of Mūsa and Hārūn." (49) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "Have you believed in him before I could permit you? He must certainly be your leader who has taught you magic! You shall shortly come to learn! I will amputate your hands and feet from opposite sides and crucify all of you!" (50) They said, "It matters not. We shall surely return to our Lord." (51) "We desire that our Lord forgive our sins because we have been the first believers."

PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* CALLS THE MAGICIANS TO CHALLENGE SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام, BUT THEY ARE DEFEATED AND BELIEVE IN ALLĀH

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was unable to reply to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, but needed to maintain his sway over the people. Therefore, "Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said to the ministers around him, *'This is certainly a knowledgeable magician. He intends to expel you from your land with his magic. What do you advise?'"*

According to Surah A'rāf, the ministers made the above statement. There is no contradiction here because people always say what their leaders say. It is therefore probable that they merely repeated what Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said.

The ministers then offered their advice by saying to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, *"Grant him and his brother respite while you dispatch recruiters to the towns who will bring every learned magician to you."*

Surah Tāhā mentions that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"arrange an appointment between us, that neither us nor you will violate. Fix an open plain for this.' Mūsa* عليه السلام *said, 'Your appointment shall be on the day of adornment, and the people should be gathered at midmorning."* [*Surah 20, verses 58, 59*]

Everyone was gathered on an open plain on the day and the news of Sayyidina Mūsa and Hārūn's عليها السلام message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* had already spread. People had been talking that they would follow the way of the victor. They said that they would follow the beliefs of the magicians if they won

the contest. They also had it in mind to follow Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام if he won, but they never mentioned this out of fear for Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* himself. It is for this reason that they indirectly indicated to this by adding the word *"Perhaps"* in their statement, when they said, *"Perhaps we shall follow the magicians if they emerge as victors.*

Like all people whose interests are restricted to this world, the first thing that the magicians asked Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was, *"Shall we receive any prize if we are victorious? 'Certainly!"* replied Fir'oun, "You will not only be handsomely rewarded, but *"you shall be from those who are close to me."*

When the contest began, the magicians asked *"O Mūsa! Either you throw, or we be first to throw." 'Mūsa* عليه السلام *said, 'Throw what you wish to throw.' So they threw their ropes and staffs saying, 'By Fir'oun's honour! We shall certainly be the victors!*

"Then Mūsa threw his staff which (became a large serpent that) *instantly swallowed what they conjured."* When the magicians saw that Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام serpent swallowed all the snakes that they had conjured, they realised that he was not a magician because none could be better than them. They realised that he must be Allāh's Prophet because such a demonstration can be possible only with Allāh's help. This conviction caused them to be *"cast down in prostration (whereupon) they submitted, 'We believe in the Lord of the universe, in the Lord of Mūsa and Hārūn."'*

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was now belittled because the very people whom he employed to falsify Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام had now become their followers. To save face, he therefore resorted to threatening them. He told them, *"Have you believed in him before I could permit you?"* He was so besotted by his authority that he even wished to be master of their thoughts and heartfelt inclinations. Many leaders wish to force their subjects into conforming to their beliefs, whereas this is not in their control.

He then told them, *"He* [Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام] *must certainly be your leader who has taught you magic (because of which you allowed him to be victorious)! You shall shortly come to learn! I will amputate your hands and feet from opposite sides and crucify all of you!"*

Since they now possessed the courage of Belief *(Imān)*, the magicians were undeterred by Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* threats. *"They said, 'It matters not. We shall surely return to our Lord."* They were convinced that Allāh would reward them for their Belief *(Imān)* and determination, They continued to say, *"We desire that our Lord forgive our sins because we have been the first believers (among all those present at that time)."*

۞ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِىٓ إِنَّكُم مُّتَّبَعُونَ (52) فَأَرْسَلَ فِرْعَوْنُ فِى ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ (53) إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ (54) وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَآئِظُونَ (55) وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَٰذِرُونَ (56) فَأَخْرَجْنَٰهُم مِّن جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ (57) وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ (58) كَذَٰلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَٰهَا بَنِىٓ

إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾ فَأَتْبَعُوهُم مُّشْرِقِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾ فَلَمَّا تَرَٰٓءَا ٱلْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّا
لَمُدْرَكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ قَالَ كَلَّآ ۖ إِنَّ مَعِىَ رَبِّى سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٦٢﴾ فَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنِ ٱضْرِب
بِّعَصَاكَ ٱلْبَحْرَ ۖ فَٱنفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَٱلطَّوْدِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦٣﴾ وَأَزْلَفْنَا ثَمَّ ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ
﴿٦٤﴾ وَأَنجَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥٓ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ
وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٦٨﴾

(52) We sent revelation to Mūsa saying, "Lead My bondsmen away by night. You will certainly be followed." (53) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) sent recruiters to the towns. (54) "They are but a small group..." (55) ". ..who have certainly infuriated us..." (56) "....when we are an alert force." (57) So We removed them from gardens and springs... (58) ". . . And from treasures and a splendid setting. (59) This is how it was. And We made the Bani Isrā'īl successors to them. (60) So at sunrise, they pursued them. (61) When the two parties set eyes on each other, Mūsa 's people said, "We will surely be apprehended." (62) "Never!" replied Mūsa, "My Lord is with me and He will certainly guide me." (63) So We sent revelation to Mūsa telling him, "Strike the sea with your staff." It then split open, each portion being like a huge mountain. (64) On that occasion We drew the others closer. (65) And We rescued Mūsa and all those who were with him. (66) Then We drowned the others. (67) There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. (68) Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful.

ALLĀH COMMANDS SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام TO LEAD HIS PEOPLE AWAY AT NIGHT THEY ARE PURSUED, BUT PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* AND HIS PEOPLE ARE EVENTUALLY DROWNED

Allāh says that He *"sent revelation to Mūsa saying, 'Lead My bondsmen away by night.'"* However, Allāh warned him by saying, *"You will certainly be followed."* Allāh also reassured Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام by telling him that even if he is followed, he should never fear anything. Allāh says in verse 77 of Surah TāHā (Surah 20), *"Neither should you fear anyone pursuing you, nor should you have any other fear."*

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* always feared that the Bani Isrā'īl would soon leave Egypt, so he hastily tried to muster a force to restrain them. Allāh says, *"Pharaoh (Fir'aun) sent recruiters to the towns."* To reassure his soldiers that they have nothing to fear, he told them that the Bani Isrā'īl *"are but a small group..."*

To incite them further he told them that the Bani Isrā'īl are people *"who have certainly infuriated us* (by many acts that they have carried out. We cannot allow them to escape, because) *we are an alert force."* Other commentators like Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه have interpreted this statement to mean that they are a well-equipped and well-armed force.

However, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his army were delayed and caught up with

the Bani Isrā'īl only when the latter were at the coast. The day was already bright when the two armies caught sight of each other.

Allāh says, *"So at sunrise, they pursued them. When the two parties set eyes on each other, Mūsa's people said* (when they saw the overwhelming strength of Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* army), *'We will surely be apprehended.' 'Never!' replied Mūsa, 'My Lord is with me and He will certainly guide me.*

Allāh says that He *"sent revelation to Mūsa telling him, 'Strike the sea with your staff' It then split open (into many paths), each portion (path) being (being bounded by walls of water that were each) like a huge mountain."*

The Bani Isrā'īl crossed the sea. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his army did not stop to think what was the cause of this unusual spectacle. If they had stopped to think about it, they would also have realised that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was Allāh's true messenger. Even if they believed at that moment, they could have been saved from destruction. However, they blindly observed the spectacle and then charged behind the Bani Isrā'īl.

As the Bani Isrā'īl reached the other shore, the waters again converged and drowned Fir'oun and his entire army. Allāh says in verses 90 and 91 of Surah Yunus (Surah 10), *"Until (the time came when) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) began to drown, he said, 'I believe that there is no deity except Him in Whom the Bani Isrā'īl believe, and I am from those who surrender.* - Allāh then told him, *"Do you believe now? When you were disobedient before and among the corrupters?"*

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* thought that he would soon seize the Bani Isrā'īl and that he would return to his pleasures. Little did he know that this would not be. He was never to enjoy the pleasures that he was accustomed to. Allāh says about him and his army, *"So We removed them from gardens and springs. And from treasures and a splendid setting."*

With regard to his plight in the Hereafter, Allāh says in verses 98 and 99 of Surah Hūd (Surah 11), *"He will lead his people on the Day of Judgement and enter them into the Fire. It is an evil place indeed in which they shall be entered. Curse has been made to pursue them in this world and in the Hereafter as well. It will be an evil prize that they will receive."*

After mentioning that Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* people were deprived of all their worldly pleasures, Allāh says, *"This is how it was. And We made the Bani Isrā'īl successors to them."* The commentators Wāhidi رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه say that Allāh allowed the Bani Isrā'īl to return to Egypt and enjoy the pleasures once possessed by the Copts. Other commentators have mentioned that the Bani Isrā'īl returned to take possession of the wealth that belonged to the Copts, after which they headed for Shām (*Syria*) with Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

Another group of commentators are of the opinion that the Bani Isrā'īl did return to rule Egypt, but only during the time of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. In my humble opinion, this is the best interpretation. The verses do not restrict the occurrence to any specific time, so the Bani Isrā'īl could well have returned after many years.

"There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe.

Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful." Allāh has the power to punish and reward. The believers (*Mu'minīn*) fear His punishment and hope for His mercy.

وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿69﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿70﴾ قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ
أَصْنَامًا فَنَظَلُّ لَهَا عَٰكِفِينَ ﴿71﴾ قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ ﴿72﴾ أَوْ يَنفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ
يَضُرُّونَ ﴿73﴾ قَالُوا۟ بَلْ وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا كَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿74﴾ قَالَ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ
﴿75﴾ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُمُ ٱلْأَقْدَمُونَ ﴿76﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِّىٓ إِلَّا رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿77﴾ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَنِى فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ ﴿78﴾ وَٱلَّذِى هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِى وَيَسْقِينِ ﴿79﴾ وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ
﴿80﴾ وَٱلَّذِى يُمِيتُنِى ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ ﴿81﴾ وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَطْمَعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لِى خَطِيٓـَٔتِى يَوْمَ
ٱلدِّينِ ﴿82﴾ رَبِّ هَبْ لِى حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِى بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿83﴾ وَٱجْعَل لِّى لِسَانَ
صِدْقٍ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿84﴾ وَٱجْعَلْنِى مِن وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿85﴾ وَٱغْفِرْ لِأَبِىٓ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿86﴾ وَلَا تُخْزِنِى يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿87﴾ يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿88﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى ٱللَّهَ
بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿89﴾

(69) Recite to them the incident of Ibrahīm. (70) When he said to his people and to his father, "What do you worship?" (71) They replied, "We worship idols and we are devoted to them." (72) He asked, "Do they hear you when you call to them?" (73) "Or can they benefit or harm you?" (74) They replied, "But we found our forefathers doing the same." (75) He said, "Do you see what you worship..." (76) ". . .you and your forebears..." (77) "... They are all my enemies, except the Lord of the universe." (78) "... Who has created me and Who guides me." (79) "... Who feeds me and gives me drink." (80) ".... And who cures me when I am ill." (81) "... Who will grant me death and then revive me." (82) "...Whom I hope will forgive my shortcomings on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah)." (83) "O my Lord! Confer on me wisdom and join me with the righteous." (84) ". . .And maintain a favourable word for me among those who are to come." (85) "...And make me from the inheritors of the bounteous Heaven." (86) "Forgive my father, for he is among those who have deviated." (87) "Do not humiliate me on the Day when people will be resurrected." (88) "...The day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any avail." (89) ".....Besides for him who comes to Allāh with a sincere heart."

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام PREACHES ONENESS OF ALLĀH (*TAUHĪD*) TO HIS PEOPLE AND SUPPLICATE S TO ALLĀH

Numerous verses of the Qur'ān mention the debates that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام had with his people and with his father. A similar discussion as the one

above is narrated in Surah Anbiya as well. In the foregoing verse', Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Recite to them the incident of Ibrahīm."*

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام *"said to his people and to his father, 'What do you worship?"'* Although he was aware of the fact that they worshipped idols, he asked them the question so that they admit it and so that he could pose further questions to them in order to convince them of their foolishness.

"They replied, 'We worship idols and we are devoted to them.' Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام *then asked them, "Do they hear you when you call to them (for assistance)? Or can they benefit* (when you worship them) *or harm you* (when you do not)?"

Unable to find an answer, they replied like all polytheists do by saying, *"But we found our forefathers doing the same."* They were blindly following the practices of their forefathers even though the truth was before them.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام told them, *"Do you see what you* (and your forebears) *worship? They are all my enemies, except the Lord of the universe."* They will lead one to the eternal punishment of Hell.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام then proceeded to describe Allāh to them. He mentioned that Allāh is He:

- **"Who has created me and Who guides me."**
- **"Who feeds me and gives me drink."**
- **"Who cures me when I am ill."**
- **"Who will grant me death and then revive me."**
- **"Who I hope will forgive my shortcomings on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*."**

By saying this, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام hoped to impress upon the minds of his people that Allāh has all these qualities and more, whereas their idols do not possess a single one of these. By making the last statement, he taught them that Allāh is Most Forgiving and will even forgive the polytheists if they sincerely repent.

The statement is also a lesson for the believers *(Mu'minīn)* because they should contemplate that if a Prophet of Allāh عليه السلام considered himself to have shortcomings, they are more needy of Allāh' s forgiveness and should repent more.

The verses then describe certain supplications of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. He said, *"O my Lord! Confer on me wisdom..." 'Wisdom"* refers to perfect understanding and knowledge. It may also refer to the knowledge of Allāh's injunctions and His attributes. Other commentators have mentioned that it refers to Prophethood. *["Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 19 p. 98]*

".....and join me with the righteous." The 'Sālihīn" (Righteous people) are those who have been accepted by Allāh. Knowledge and deeds are worthless if Allāh does not accept them. It is for this reason that Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام asked Allāh for this in addition to the du'ā for knowledge.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed further saying, *"And maintain a favourable*

word for me among those who are to come." He asked Allāh to make the forthcoming Prophet عليه السلام and their Ummahs remember him in good faith. Allāh accepted this du'ā of his and all the nations after him revere him and hold him in high esteem. It is no secret that the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have a especially high regard for him.

Allāh even addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Qur'ān saying, *"Then We sent revelation to you that, 'Follow the creed of Ibrahīm. "'* The Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remember Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام when they say in the final sitting posture of every Salāh, "O Allāh! Convey Your special mercies on Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and on the family of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم like you have conveyed these on Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and the family of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام."

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed further by saying, *"And make me from the inheritors of the bounteous Heaven."* This teaches us that a person should continue to ask for Heaven irrespective of hioner piety.

"Forgive my father, for he is among those who have deviated." He prayed that Allāh should guide his father to accept oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, thereby qualifying himself for forgiveness. The details of this prayer *(du'ā)* have been discussed in the commentary of verse 114 of Surah Tauba (*Surah 9*) and verse 41 of Surah Ibrahīm (*Surah 14*).

"Do not humiliate me on the Day when people will be resurrected; the day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any avail, besides for him who comes to Allāh with a whole heart." Together with supplicating for Heaven, one should also seek refuge from being disgraced on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* by suffering punishment.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام will meet his father Āzar on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. His father's face will be dark and dreary. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام will tell his father, "Did I not tell you that you should not disobey me?" His father will reply, "If you command me to follow you now, I will do so."

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام will then supplicate to Allāh saying, "O Allāh! You promised me that you will not humiliate me on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. What humiliation can be greater than the fact that my father is destroyed?" Allāh will tell him, "I have forbidden Heaven for the disbelievers. O Ibrahīm! Look down." When he will look down, he will see a filthy, hairy scorpion (which was once his father). The scorpion will then be flung into Hell. [*Bukhari p. 473*]

When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام will see the despicable condition of his father, he will detest it greatly and forget any humiliation.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام describes the Day of Judgement as *"the day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any avail."* This is a great lesson for those who are besotted with earning the things of this world without caring for Lawful *(Halāl)* and unlawful *(Harām)* means. In the process they discard the obligations (*Farā'idh*) and Compulsories practices of religion. They should remember that all

this will destroy them on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. However, if they earn their wealth lawfully and spend it in lawful and meritorious avenues, they will see the fruits of it on the Day of Judgement.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام says that wealth and children will only assist the person *"who comes to Allāh with a sincere heart."*

Note: *"And maintain a favourable word for me among those who are to come."* This prayer *(du'ā)* of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام teaches us that it is necessary for a believer *(Mu'min)* to desire that his name must not be smothered in this world. Although none of his deeds should be carried out with the intention of attaining fame, he also ask Allāh to preserve his name. None can be more sincere than the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, yet he prayed to Allāh saying, "O Allāh! Make me small in my own eyes, but elevated in the eyes of the people."

This prayer *(du'ā)* of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is an effective antidote to the poison of pride, because a person will then not think too highly of himself and will not look down on others.

Every person should make an attempt to always clear his name of any suspicion. This is especially important for people who are known to be pious or holding some position in society. People are incorrect when they merely brush off any suspicion on themselves by saying that the slanderers will be punished for their slander. They should make a concerted effort to clear their names so that the stigma does not taint their reputation. If they do not do this, they will be casting people into further sin by giving them a greater opportunity to backbite. In addition to this they will be unable to preach to people.

وَأُزْلِفَتِ ٱلْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (90) وَبُرِّزَتِ ٱلْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ (91) وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ
(92) مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ هَلْ يَنصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنتَصِرُونَ (93) فَكُبْكِبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَٱلْغَاوُونَ (94) وَجُنُودُ
إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ (95) قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ (96) تَٱللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ (97)
إِذْ نُسَوِّيكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ (98) وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ (99) فَمَا لَنَا مِن شَٰفِعِينَ
(100) وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ (101) فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (102) إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً
وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ (103) وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ (104)

(90) Heaven will be brought close to the pious... (91) .. while Hell will be revealed to the deviant ones. (92) They will be told, "Where are those whom you worshipped..." (93) "...besides Allāh? Can they assist you or protect you?" (94) They will all be thrown headlong therein, together with those gone astray... (95) ... and the entire army of Satan (Iblīs). (96) While disputing there, they will say... (97) ..."By Allāh! We were certainly in manifest error..." (98) "...when we equated you to the Lord of the universe. (99) "Only the criminals led us astray." (100)

"Now there is no intercessor for us..." (101) "... and no bosom friend either." (102) "If only we were given the chance to return. Then we would have been from the believers." (103) "There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe." (104) Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful.

THE REMORSE AND DISPUTES OF THE PEOPLE IN HELL, WHEN THEY WISH TO BE RETURNED TO THE WORLD

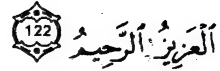
The above verses depict the scene on the Day of Judgement. Allāh begins by saying that, on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, *"Heaven will be brought close to the pious, while Hell will be revealed to the deviant ones."* The pious people will be exuberant, while the others will be filled with fear. The disbelievers will then be asked, "Where are those whom you worshipped besides Allāh? Can they assist you or protect you (from the pending punishment)?"

Thereafter, "They will all be thrown headlong therein, together with those gone astray and the entire army of Satan *(Iblīs)*."

"While disputing there (in Hell), they will say, 'By Allāh! We were certainly in manifest error when we equated you to the Lord of the universe." Swearing by Allāh, they will admit to their folly. They will also admit to their blind following and say, "Only the criminals led us astray."

Realising that they cannot escape the imminent doom ahead, they will say, "Now there is no intercessor for us, and no bosom friend either. If only we were given the chance to return (to the world). Then we would have been from the believers (and discarded our heretic beliefs)."

Allāh then repeats His announcement when He says, "There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful."

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ (105) إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (106) إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
أَمِينٌ (107) فَٱتَّقُوا ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ (108) وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ (109) فَٱتَّقُوا ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ (110) ۞ قَالُوٓا أَنُؤْمِنُ لَكَ وَٱتَّبَعَكَ ٱلْأَرْذَلُونَ (111)
قَالَ وَمَا عِلْمِي بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (112) إِنْ حِسَابُهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّي لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ (113) وَمَآ
أَنَا۠ بِطَارِدِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (114) إِنْ أَنَا۠ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ (115) قَالُوا لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهِ يَٰنُوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ
ٱلْمَرْجُومِينَ (116) قَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي كَذَّبُونِ (117) فَٱفْتَحْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ فَتْحًا وَنَجِّنِي وَمَن
مَّعِيَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (118) فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥ فِي ٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلْمَشْحُونِ (119) ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدُ
ٱلْبَاقِينَ (120) إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ (121) وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ

(105) The people of Nūh denied the apostles. (106) When their brother Nūh said to them, "Do you not fear?" (107) "I am certainly a trustworthy messenger to you. (108) "So fear Allāh and obey me." (109) "I do not ask you for any remuneration for this. My remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe." (110) "So fear Allāh and obey me." (111) They replied, "Should we believe in you when the lowest of people follow you?" (112) He said, "Why should I be concerned about their deeds?" (113) "Their reckoning is the duty of my Lord. If only you would perceive!" (114) "I shall never discard the believers. (115) "I am merely a clear warner." (116) They said, "O Nūh! If you do not desist, you will certainly be of those who are stoned." (117) Nūh عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! My people have falsified me." (118) "So decide between me and them, and rescue myself and those believers who are with me. (119) So We rescued him and those with him in a brimming ark. (120) Thereafter We drowned the rest. (121) There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. (122) Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful.

SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام PREACHES ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)* TO HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY REJECT HIM AND ARE FINALLY DROWNED IN THE FLOODS

After citing the incident of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Allāh continues to narrate the stories of many other Prophets عليهم السلام. The first of these is Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, followed by those of Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام, Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام, Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام advised his people to abstain from polytheism *(shirk)*, telling them that he is *"certainly a trustworthy messenger"* to them because he is only conveying to them what he has been instructed by Allāh. Therefore, he told them, *"So fear Allāh and obey me. I do not ask you for any remuneration for this* (i.e. for my efforts in propagation). *My remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe. So fear Allāh and obey me."* He exhorted them to reflect upon his position and consider why he is making such a great effort without any worldly motives.

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام exerted him self in preaching to them for 950 years, but only a few accepted his message. One of the excuses that the people used for not accepting his message was that they said, *"Should we believe in you when the lowest of people follow you?"*

They detested associating with the lower classes, just as the polytheists of Makkah felt. They therefore indicated that they would believe in him only if he disassociated with those of the lower classes of society. The polytheists of Makkah also wanted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to disassociate himself from certain Sahābah رضى الله عنهم like Sayyidina Bilāl رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Suhayb رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Ammār رضى الله عنه and others.

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام replied by saying, *"Why should I be concerned about their deeds?"* In this statement he made it clear to them that he was not concerned

about the occupations of people, even though others may consider it to be low and mean. The criteria are belief *(Imān)* and good deeds. Allāh takes these two things into account when judging people and not their worldly occupations.

He told them, *"Their reckoning is the duty of my Lord. If only you would perceive!"* Allāh will decide their status on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* in accordance to their Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds. By saying this, he also alluded to the fact that they must be conscious about their own fate on the day of Judgement.

He then made it clear to them that he will never pander to their wishes by telling them, *"I shall never discard the believers. I am merely a clear warner."* He told them that his duty was to inform them of Allāh's commands, which he had accomplished.

Some commentators have mentioned that the nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام meant to tell him that the lower class people were not sincere believers, but followed him for ulterior motives. It was in reply to this allegation that he told them, *"Why should I be concerned about their deeds (i.e. their inner motives. I shall believe in what I can see of them)?"* He told them further that only Allāh can judge the inner condition of people because *"Their reckoning is the duty of my Lord. If only you would perceive (the laws of Religion, then you would have understood this)!"*

Unable to argue any further, *"They said, 'O Nūh! If you do not desist, you will certainly be of those who are stoned.'"* Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 25-35*] and Surah Nūh [*Surah 71, verses 1-23*] make mention of other arguments that the people had with Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام.

After an extremely trying and difficult period of 950 years, Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام patience could not take any more. It was only then that he finally supplicated to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! My people have falsified me. So decide between myself and them (by punishing them), and rescue myself and those believers who are with me."*

Allāh then instructed him to build an ark and, when it was completed, water began to flood the earth from beneath and above it. Allāh commanded the people on the ark saying, *"Embark upon it! With the name of Allāh shall it travel and anchor. Surely my Lord is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."* Allāh says, *"So We rescued him and those with him in a brimming ark. Thereafter We drowned the rest."* The entire episode is recounted in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 59-64*] and Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verse 25-49*].

Note: Allāh mentions in the beginning, *"The people of Nūh denied the apostles."* Although only one Prophet was sent to them [viz. Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام], Allāh uses the plural form by saying "apostles" instead of *"apostle."* This is so because denying one Prophet is tantamount to denying all of them, since all of them preached the same message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*. Therefore, denying the oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* preached by one Prophet is the same as denying the message propagated by all of them.

In addition, every Prophets عليهم السلام instructed his Ummah to believe in the

Prophets عليهم السلام after him. Therefore, by denying the message of any Prophet, people also deny this instruction, and will deny all the other Prophets عليهم السلام as well.

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿123﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿124﴾ إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿125﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿126﴾ وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿127﴾ أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ ءَايَةً تَعْبَثُونَ ﴿128﴾ وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ ﴿129﴾ وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُم بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ ﴿130﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿131﴾ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَمَدَّكُم بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿132﴾ أَمَدَّكُم بِأَنْعَٰمٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿133﴾ وَجَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿134﴾ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿135﴾ قَالُوا۟ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْنَآ أَوَعَظْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْوَٰعِظِينَ ﴿136﴾ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا خُلُقُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿137﴾ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿138﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿139﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿140﴾

(123) The Ād denied the apostles. (124) When their brother Hūd عليه السلام told them, "Do you not fear?" (125) "I am certainly a trustworthy messenger to you." (126) "So fear Allāh and obey me." (127) "I do not ask you any remuneration for this. My remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe." (128) "Do you build a monument on every elevated place for sport?" (129) "And do you construct large palaces so that, perchance, you may live forever?" (130) "...And, when you seize control, you seize like tyrants." (131) So fear Allāh and obey me. (132) "Fear the Being Who has strengthened you with the things that you know..." (133) ".....He has strengthened you with animals, sons..." (134) ".... orchards and springs." (135) "Undoubtedly I fear for you the punishment of a great day." (136) They replied, "It is immaterial to us whether you advise us or whether you are not from the advisors." (137) "This is merely the behaviour of the old men." (138) "We shall never be punished." (139) They falsified him so We destroyed them. There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. (140) Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful.

SAYYIDINA HŪD عليه السلام IS SENT TO HIS NATION, BUT THEY DENY HIM

Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام was sent as the Prophet to his nation, called the Ād. However, they behaved just like the people of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. He told them, *"Do you not fear? I am certainly a trustworthy messenger to you. So fear Allāh and obey me. I do not ask you any remuneration for this. My remuneration is the responsibility of* Allāh, *the Lord of the universe."*

The Ād were an extremely powerful nation, as described in Surah A'rāf, where Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام told them that Allāh had increased them

"Considerably in stature" compared to other nations. Allāh says about them in Surah Fajr. *"Any One like them was not created in the cities."*

Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام asked them, *"Do you build a monument on every elevated place for sport?"* Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that they used to sit on these huge monuments and poke fun at passing travellers. They also constructed such large and fortified palaces that a person would think that they are to live there eternally. It is in reference to this that Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام told them, *"And do you construct large palaces so that, perchance, you may live forever?"*

Certain commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that they built these huge palaces with the hope that they would live eternally. Others interpret it to mean that they built these palaces so that they do not have to worry about death reaching them there.

Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام also told them, *"And, when you seize control, you seize like tyrants."* Because of their enormous stature and build, they grew very arrogant and used to exclaim, *"Who can be more powerful than us?"* Therefore, they plundered many cities and mercilessly slaughtered the people there.

"So fear Allāh and obey me. Fear the Being Who has strengthened you with the things that you know. He has strengthened you with animals, Sons, orchards and springs." It is therefore necessary that they be grateful to Allāh and worship Him.

Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام compassionately warned them saying, *"Undoubtedly I fear for you the punishment of a great day."* Like the day, the punishment will also be severe.

Not heeding what he said, *"They replied, 'It is immaterial to us whether you advise us or whether you are not from the advisors* (we will do as we please. As for the things you warn us about,) *this is merely the behaviour of the old men."* They meant to tell him that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* would never come despite the warnings of the previous generations. They also added, *"We shall never be punished."*

"They falsified him so We destroyed them." They were then destroyed by a severe windstorm which blew relentlessly for seven nights and eight days. The details of their punishment are mentioned in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, Surah Ahqāf, Surah Dhāriyāt, Surah Qamar and Surah Al Hāqa.

Allāh then repeats a previous statement, *"There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful."*

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ (141) إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ صَالِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (142) إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ (143) فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ (144) وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (145) أَتُتْرَكُونَ فِي مَا هَاهُنَا آمِنِينَ (146) فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ (147) وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ (148) وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرِهِينَ (149) فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَأَطِيعُونِ (150) وَلَا تُطِيعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ (151) ٱلَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ
(152) قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَحَّرِينَ (153) مَآ أَنتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بِـَٔايَةٍ إِن كُنتَ
مِنَ ٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ (154) قَالَ هَـٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةٌ لَّهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ (155) وَلَا
تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (156) فَعَقَرُوهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ نَـٰدِمِينَ (157)
فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ (158) وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ
لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ (159)

(141) The Thamud denied the apostles. (142) When their brother Sālih told them, "Do you not fear?" (143) "I am certainly a trustworthy messenger to you." (144) "So fear Allāh and obey me." (145) "I do not ask you for any remuneration for this. My remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe." (146) "Will you be left in peace with what is here?" (147) ".... In orchards, springs..." (148) ".....plantations and date palms which have entwined thickets?" (149) "......And you boastfully carve homes from the mountains." (150) "So fear Allāh and obey me." (151) "Do not obey the command of the transgressors. (152) "...who are those who cause anarchy on earth and do not make amends." (153) They said, "You are but one of the bewitched ones." (154) "You are merely a human like ourselves. So produce a sign for us if you are from the truthful." (155) Sālih عليه السلام said, "This is the camel. It will have a day to drink and your animals will have an appointed day to drink." (156) "Do not touch it with evil intentions, for then the punishment of a grave day will afflict you." (157) However, they killed the camel, but then grew to regret it. (158) The punishment then seized them. There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. (159) Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful.

THE THAMUD REJECT SAYYIDINAH SĀLIH عليه السلام AND ARE PUNISHED

The Thamud came after the Ād and were also a deviant nation. Allāh sent Sayyidinah Sālih عليه السلام from among them as a Prophet. He told them, *'I am certainly a trustworthy messenger to you. So fear Allāh and obey me. I do not ask you for any remuneration for this. My remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe."*

He also reminded them of the favours that Allāh bestowed on them. He reminded them about their *"orchards, springs, plantations and date palms which have entwined thickets?"*

He also told them, *"And you boastfully carve homes from the mountains."* Allāh granted them the ability to carve the mountains into homes. He reminded them that these pleasures will be short-lived because everyone will meet their death.

He added, *"So fear Allāh and obey me. Do not obey the command of the transgressors, who are those who cause anarchy on earth and do not make amends."* He

warned them against following these people, who were sure to lead them to destruction.

All they said was, *"You are but one of the bewitched ones. You are merely a human like ourselves."* Allāh quotes them in Surah Qamar: *"If we were to follow a lonesome human from among ourselves we would surely be astray and insane. Has a revelation come only to him from among all of us? Nay, he is but an arrogant liar."* [*Surah 54, verses 24, 25*]

Finally they told Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام, *"So produce a sign for us if you are from the truthful."* According to certain commentators, they asked him to produce a pregnant camel from a mountain. He warned them that they will be punished if they do not believe in a miracle that they request for.

When the miracle was displayed, *"Sālih عليه السلام said, 'This is the camel. It will have a day to drink and your animals will have an appointed day to drink.'"* Turns were stipulated because the miraculous camel would drink all the water of a well by herself.

However, the people disliked that the camel should receive preferential treatment. It was then that they mutually decided to kill her. When Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام learnt about their evil intentions, he told them, *"Do not touch it with evil intentions, for then the punishment of a grave day will afflict you.*

Not heeding his warnings, *"they killed the camel, but then grew to regret it* (when they were afflicted by Allāh's punishment)." Eventually, *"The punishment then seized them."* The details of the punishment have been given in the commentaries of Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 73-79*] and Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 61-68*].

Allāh says, *"There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful."*

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ (160) إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ لُوطٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (161) إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ (162) فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ (163) وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (164) أَتَأْتُونَ الذُّكْرَانَ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ (165) وَتَذَرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ (166) قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهِ يَا لُوطُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِينَ (167) قَالَ إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُمْ مِنَ الْقَالِينَ (168) رَبِّ نَجِّنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ (169) فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ (170) إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي الْغَابِرِينَ (171) ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا الْآخَرِينَ (172) وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ (173) إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (174) وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ (175)

(160) The nation of Lūt denied the messengers. (161) When their brother Lūt told them, "Do you not fear?" (162) "I am certainly a trustworthy messenger to you. (163) "So fear Allāh and obey me." (164) "I do not ask you for any remuneration for this. my remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe." (165) "Do you go unto men from the universe... (166) "... leaving aside your spouses whom your Lord has created for you? You are certainly a transgressing nation." (167) They replied, "O Lūt! If you do not desist, you will surely be from the banished ones. (168) Lūt عليه السلام said, "I am certainly among those who deplore your action." (169) "O my Lord! Save myself and my family from what these people do." (170) So We saved him and all the members of his family... (171) ... except an old lady, who was among those who were left behind. (172) Then We destroyed the others. (173) We sent a torrential shower upon them. Evil indeed was the rain of those who were forewarned. (174) There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. (175) Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful.

SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام PREACHES TO HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY THREATEN HIM THEY ARE EVENTUALLY DESTROYED BY A SHOWER OF STONES

Allāh sent Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام to preach to certain nations who lived on the banks of the Jordan river. These people practised homosexuality, as explained in the commentaries of Surah A'rāf and Surah Hūd as well. They were the first people on earth to engage in this filthy sin.

They were also highway robbers. Allāh quotes Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام as saying in Surah Ankabūt, *"Do you approach men, waylay the highways and perpetrate evil in your gatherings?"* When Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام preached to them, they threatened him saying, *"O Lūt! If you do not desist, you will surely be from the banished ones."* They mocked him by saying that he considers himself to be too clean to live with them.

"Lūt عليه السلام said, 'I am certainly among those who deplore your action." Despite all his efforts for many years, the people did not listen to him but continued to do as they had always done. Eventually, they even said to him, *"Bring Allāh's punishment to us if you are from amongst the truthful."*

Surah A'rāf ,Surah Shu'arā and Surah Naml state that Allāh showered them with stones. Surah Hijr and Surah Hūd state that their towns were raised to the sky and then thrown down, and Surah Hijr adds that a scream destroyed them. As has been discussed in the commentary of Surah A'rāf [Surah 7, verses 80-84], all three punishments afflicted them.

Allāh says, *"So We saved him and all the members of his family except an old lady (Sayyidina Lūt's عليه السلام wife), who was among those who were left behind. Then We destroyed the others. We sent a torrential shower upon them. Evil indeed was the rain of those who were forewarned."* The details of this have been given in the commentary of Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 80-84*], Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 77-83*], Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verses 58-77*]. More will still be mentioned in Surah Ankabūt [*Surah 29, verses 3 1-35*].

Allāh concludes the incident by saying, *"There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful."*

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَٰبُ لْـَٔيْكَةِ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ (176) إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (177) إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
أَمِينٌ (178) فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ (179) وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ
رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ (180) ۞ أَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُخْسِرِينَ (181) وَزِنُوا۟ بِٱلْقِسْطَاسِ
ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ (182) وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا۟ ٱلنَّاسَ أَشْيَآءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ (183) وَٱتَّقُوا۟
ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ وَٱلْجِبِلَّةَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ (184) قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَحَّرِينَ (185) وَمَآ أَنتَ إِلَّا
بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِن نَّظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ (186) فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِن
كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ (187) قَالَ رَبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (188) فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابُ
يَوْمِ ٱلظُّلَّةِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (189) إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم
مُّؤْمِنِينَ (190) وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ (191)

(176) The people of Aykah denied the messengers. (177) When Shu'ayb عليه السلام told them, "Do you not fear?" (178) "I am certainly a trustworthy messenger to you. (179) "So fear Allāh and obey me." (180) "I do not ask you for any remuneration for this. My remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe." (181) "Measure in full and do not be of those who diminish." (182) "And weigh with a just balance. (183) "Do not deplete people's property and do not spread anarchy on earth." (184) "Fear the Being Who created you and all the previous creations." (185) They said, "You are but from the bewitched ones. (186) "You are but a human like ourselves. In fact, we consider you to be from the liars." (187) "So cause a piece of the sky to fall on us if you are from the truthful ones." (188) Shu'ayb عليه السلام said, "My Lord knows best what you do." (189) So they falsified him and the punishment of a day of the canopy seized them. It was certainly a punishment of a grave day. (190) There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. (191) Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful.

SAYYIDINA SHU'AYB عليه السلام TELLS HIS PEOPLE NOT TO CHEAT IN WEIGHT AND MEASURE HOWEVER, THEY DISOBEY HIM AND ARE MADE TO SUFFER PUNISHMENT

Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام was sent to the people of Aykah and the people of Madyan. One of the crimes that they perpetrated was that they cheated people in weighing and measuring goods. Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام told them, *"Do you not fear? I am certainly a trustworthy messenger to you. So fear Allāh and obey me. I do*

not ask you for any remuneration for this. My remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe. Measure in full and do not be of those who diminish. And weigh with a just balance. Do not deplete people 's property and do not spread anarchy on earth."

The people told him, *"O Shu'ayb! Does your Allāh command you that we should forsake what our forefathers worshipped and that we should do as we please with our wealth?"* In saying this, they meant to tell him that they will do as they please with their wealth and that they will weigh and measure as they desire. People tend to say such things when they forget that they are Allāh's servants and that all their wealth also belongs to Allāh.

Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام advised them saying, *"Fear the Being Who created you and all the previous creations."* However, they did not heed his advices and said, *"You are but from the bewitched ones. You are but a human like ourselves. In fact, we consider you to be from the liars. So cause a piece of the sky to fall on us if you are from the truthful ones."*

"Shu'ayb عليه السلام said, 'My Lord knows best what you do (He will therefore punish you when He deems it fit. I cannot punish you). " Their evil deeds were sufficient to invite Allāh's punishment.

Eventually, when they became extremely rebellious, *"the punishment of a day of the canopy seized them. It was certainly a punishment of a grave day."* Explaining this verse, Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that Allāh made the weather extremely hot. They all left their homes and sought shelter beneath the trees. Allāh then sent a dense cloud towards them., which they took as a *"canopy"* to escape the heat. When they all gathered beneath the cloud, a descending fire scorched thon all. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that this fire from the sky was exactly what they had asked for.

Note: The word Aykah refers to a densely foliaged forest. They are referred to as *"people of Aykah"* because they lived in an area where the forest was extremely thick.

This incident reads, *"When Shu'ayb told them, 'Do you not fear?"'* It does not say, *"When their brother Shu'ayb told them..."* as mentioned at the beginning of the incidents of the other Prophets عليهم السلام. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that this is so because Sayyidina Shu'ayb was not one of the indigenous people of Aykah. He belonged to the people of Madyan, like Surah Hūd mentions, *"To Madyan. We sent their brother Shu'ayb."*

Concluding this narrative Allāh repeats, *"There is certainly a great sign in this. However, most of them do not believe. Verily your Lord is Mighty, the Most Merciful."*

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿192﴾ نَزَلَ بِهِ ٱلرُّوحُ ٱلْأَمِينُ ﴿193﴾ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿194﴾ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُّبِينٍ ﴿195﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَفِى زُبُرِ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿196﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُمْ
ءَايَةً أَن يَعْلَمَهُۥ عُلَمَـٰٓؤُا۟ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿197﴾ وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَـٰهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضِ ٱلْأَعْجَمِينَ ﴿198﴾ فَقَرَأَهُۥ

عَلَيْهِم مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ (199) كَذَٰلِكَ سَلَكْنَاهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ (200)
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ (201) فَيَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ
(202) فَيَقُولُوا هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنظَرُونَ (203) أَفَبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ (204) أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِن
مَّتَّعْنَاهُمْ سِنِينَ (205) ثُمَّ جَاءَهُم مَّا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ (206) مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا
يُمَتَّعُونَ (207) وَمَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا لَهَا مُنذِرُونَ (208) ذِكْرَىٰ وَمَا كُنَّا
ظَالِمِينَ (209) وَمَا تَنَزَّلَتْ بِهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ (210) وَمَا يَنبَغِي لَهُمْ وَمَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ (211)
إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّمْعِ لَمَعْزُولُونَ (212)

(192) Without doubt, this is a revelation from the Lord of the universe. (193) The trustworthy angel descended with it... (194) "... upon your heart so that you become of the warners. (195) In the clear Arabic language. (196) Indeed, it received mention in the scriptures of the earlier nations. (197) Is it not sufficient proof to them that the scholars of the Bani Isrā'īl have knowledge of it? (198) If We were to reveal it to any non-Arab... (199) "... who was to recite it to them, they would never have believed in it. (200) In this manner have We inscribed disbelief in the hearts of the criminals. (201) They shall never believe it until they witness a painful punishment. (202) It will then come to them unexpectedly, when they do not perceive it. (203) They will then say, "Can we be granted respite?" (204) Do they seek to hasten Our punishment? (205) Tell me. If We were to allow them enjoyment for a few years... (206) "...after which that should come to them which they were promised... (207) "...the enjoyment granted to them would be of no avail to them. (208) We have destroyed only towns that had warners... (209) "... to advise. We were never oppressors. (210) The Devils (Shayātīn) do not reveal the Qur'ān. (211) They are not befitting for this, nor have they the capability. (212) They have definitely been forbidden from listening.

THE QUR'ĀN HAS BEEN REVEALED IN THE ARABIC LANGUAGE VIA THE TRUSTWORTHY ANGEL

Referring to the Qur'ān, Allāh declares, *"Without doubt, this is a revelation from the Lord of the universe. The trustworthy angel descended with it..."* Jibr'īl عليه السلام brought the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from Allāh without altering anything even in the slightest degree.

Allāh says that Jibr'īl عليه السلام brought the Qur'ān *"upon your [Muhammad's* صلى الله عليه وسلم*] heart so that you become of the warners."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to warn people and advise them by means of the Qur'ān. Allāh says in Surah An'ām, *"This Qur'ān has been revealed to me so that I warn you with it, as well as those whom it reaches."* [*Surah 6, verse 19*]

Allāh says in Surah Shura, *"in this manner did We reveal the Arabic Qur'ān to you so that you may warn the Mother of all cities, and those around her; so that you may*

warn them about the Day of Gathering, about which there shall be no doubt. A group shall be in Heaven, while another shall be in the Blaze." [*Surah 42, verse 7*]

Allāh says further that the Qur'ān is revealed *"In the clear Arabic language."* None can refute the eloquence of the Qur'ān. Until today the challenge to produce a single Surah equivalent to those of the Qur'ān has not been met. A reliable friend of mine has informed me that two computers have been commissioned with the task of meeting the challenge of the Qur'ān. Whenever these computers are fed with any Qur'ānic verse, it concedes that it cannot match it.

"....indeed, it (the Qur'ān) *received mention in the scriptures of the earlier nations."* The previous scriptures made mention of the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān. Even though people have adulterated these scriptures, such facts can still be detected.

Certain commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that the subject matter contained in the Qur'ān is also found in the previous scriptures, like Allāh says in the final verse of Surah A'la, *"This is certainly in the previous scriptures; in the scriptures of Ibrahīm and Mūsa."* [*Surah 87, verses 18, 19*]

Sayyidina Ma'qal bin Yasār رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Surah Baqarah has been given to me from the previous scriptures, while Surah TāHā, the Tawasīn (those Surahs beginning with 'Tawasīn') and the Hawāmīm (those Surahs beginning with 'HāMīm') from the tablets of Mūsa عليه السلام. Surah Fātiha and the concluding verses of Surah Baqarah (*verses 285 and 286*) have been given to me from beneath Allāh's throne. The Mufassalāt (from Surah Hujurāt until the end of the Qur'ān) have been given to me as extra (i.e. no other Prophets عليهم السلام has received anything like it)." [*Jāmi'us Saghīr*]

"Is it not sufficient proof to them that the scholars of the Bani Isrā'īl have knowledge of it?" The learned scholars of the Bani Isrā'īl who lived during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم knew very well that the Qur'ān was the truth from Allāh. Some of them became Muslims, but others did not, even though they admitted to people in private that the Qur'ān was a revelation from Allāh.

The Polytheists accepted the Jews to be learned people and even requested the Jews to teach them how to challenge the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, they refused to believe after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied to their challenges.

Allāh says, *"If We were to reveal it (the Qur'ān) to any non-Arab, who was to recite it to them, they would never have believed in it* (even though the miracle would have then been greater)."

"....in this manner have We inscribed disbelief in the hearts of the' criminals. They shall never believe it until they witness a painful punishment. It will then come to them unexpectedly, when they do not perceive" it. They will then say, *'Can we be granted respite?"'* At this moment their belief will not be acceptable. The punishment referred to in this verse could refer to some worldly punishment for not believing or it could refer to their deaths. It will also not be incorrect to say that it refers to the punishment in the grave or in the Hereafter.

Allāh then says, *"Do they seek to hasten Our punishment?"* These people are foolish to think that Allāh's punishment will not afflict them merely because it has not yet afflicted them. Nothing that they posses in this world will be of any avail to them when they suffer the punishment. With reference to this Allāh says, *"Tell me. If We were to allow them enjoyment for a few years, after which that should come to them which they were promised, then the enjoyment granted to them would be of no avail to them."*

"We have destroyed only towns that had warners to advise." Even before the revelation of the Qur'ān, Allāh only destroyed those nations who were disobedient after a warner was sent to them. They advised people and counselled them. When the people refused to accept, they were granted further respite. Eventually they were totally annihilated.

The verse warns the people whom the Qur'ān addresses. It tells them that they should also accept the truth because they could suffer the same fate as those before them. Allāh then says, *"We were never oppressors."* Allāh can never oppress any person. All His actions are based on some inner wisdom, which man may sometimes not understand.

Allāh then discusses the pristine purity of the Qur'ān, when He says, *"The Devils (Shayātīn) do not reveal the Qur'ān. They are not befitting for this, nor have they the capability. They have definitely been forbidden from listening."* The Devils *(Shayātīn)* have been banned from listening to Qur'ānic revelation in the heavens.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that this verse refutes a statement made by the Quraysh that a Jinn had become subservient to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and was teaching him the Qur'ān. Allāh says that the Devils *(Shayātīn)* cannot reveal something like the Qur'ān because the Qur'ān guides people, whereas the Devils *(Shayātīn)* are devoted to leading people astray.

Since Allāh has deprived them of the ability to even listen to the revelation of the Qur'ān, it is obvious that they cannot be a means to reveal it.

فَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿213﴾ وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿214﴾ وَٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿215﴾ فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿216﴾ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿217﴾ ٱلَّذِى يَرَىٰكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿218﴾ وَتَقَلُّبَكَ فِى ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿219﴾ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿220﴾

(213) Do not call to another god besides Allāh, for then you will be of the punished ones. (214) Warn your closest relatives. (215) And be humble to those believers who follow you. (216) If they disobey you, then say, "Verily I am exonerated from what you do." (217) Rely on the Mighty, the Most Merciful... (218) ... Who sees you when you rise... (219) .... and sees your movements with those who prostrate. (220) Without doubt, He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم, I COMMANDED TO BE HUMBLE TOWARDS THE MU'MINĪN AND TO RELY SOLELY ON ALLĀH

Allāh says in the above verses, *"Do not call to another god besides Allāh, for then you will be of the punished ones."* Although the verse is addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is intended for every member of his Ummah because he is innocent of polytheism *(shirk)* and disbelief.

Thereafter, Allāh again commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when He says, *"Warn your closest relatives."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that when this verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mounted the hill of Safa and called various tribes of the Quraysh. When they all gathered, he asked them, "Will you people believe me if I told you that an army of horsemen were advancing to attack you from behind this mountain?"

They replied, "We shall certainly believe you. We have never known you to be untruthful." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Then I am warning you of a severe punishment *(if* you do not believe in what I preach to you)." Thereupon Abu Lahab said, "May you be destroyed forever. Have you gathered us for this?" It was then that Surah Lahab (*Surah 111*) was revealed, where Allāh says, *'May the hands of Abu Lahab be shattered and he be destroyed..."*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them on that occasion, "O Quraysh! Save yourselves (i.e. from Hell by accepting Islām). I cannot save you from the pending punishment." He said this taking the names of his uncle Sayyidina Abbās رضى الله عنه and his aunt Sayyidah Safiyya رضى الله عنها. Then, addressing his daughter Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "O the daughter of Muhammad, Fātima! Ask whatever you please from my wealth. I cannot rescue you from Allāh's punishment." [*"Mishkāt" p. 460*]

With these words, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wished to impress upon their minds that family ties cannot save one from Allāh' s punishment in the Hereafter. The criteria for success there shall be Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds.

Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a messenger to the entire creation, he was specifically commanded to preach to his family. This teaches preachers that they should never neglect their families in their efforts. The fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم specifically addressed Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها, who was a believer and a child then, shows that one should pay attention to the proper religious upbringing of one's children.

Allāh says in Surah Tahrīm, *"O you who believe, save yourselves and your families from that Fire, the fuel of which is men and stones."* It is tragic to see many people nowadays who excel in preaching to others, yet neglect to bring the message home to their families.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is further commanded, "And be humble to those believers who follow you." The Mu'minīn are more worthy of receiving a cordial reception.

The fourth directive is then issued to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when

Allāh says, *"If they disobey you, then say, 'Verily I am exonerated from what you do.'"* A person should not associate with the sinful behaviour of others, but should rather disassociate from them.

Allāh then tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Rely on the Mighty, the Most Merciful, Who sees you when you rise and sees your movements with those who prostrate. Without doubt, He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing."* Allāh reassures the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should never fear the disbelievers because Allāh is Ever present and will always be there to assist. Therefore, only He must be relied on at all times.

هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن تَنَزَّلُ ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينُ ﴿221﴾ تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿222﴾ يُلْقُونَ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ كَـٰذِبُونَ ﴿223﴾ وَٱلشُّعَرَآءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ ٱلْغَاوُۥنَ ﴿224﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِى كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ﴿225﴾ وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿226﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ وَذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَٱنتَصَرُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا۟ ۗ وَسَيَعْلَمُ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَىَّ مُنقَلَبٍ يَنقَلِبُونَ ﴿227﴾

(221) Shall I inform you of the one upon whom the Devils (Shayātīn) descend? (222) They descend upon every lying sinner. (223) They steal a hearing and most of them are liars. (224) Only deviant people follow the poets. (225) Do you not see that they wander astray in every valley? (226) And that they say things which they never do? (227) Except those who believe, do good deeds, remember Allāh abundantly and avenge themselves after being oppressed. Shortly the oppressors will come to know to which place they will return.

THE DEVILS *(SHAYĀTĪN)* DESCEND UPON EVERY LIAR AND ONLY THE DEVIANT PEOPLE FOLLOW POETS

In reply to the allegation that a Jinn teaches the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Shall I inform you of the one upon whom the Devils (Shayātīn) descend? They descend upon every lying sinner. They steal a hearing and most of them are liars."* Those who are informed by the Devils *(Shayātīn)* listen attentively to what they are being told. They then transmit the same information, adding many more lies to it.

Before the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Devils *(Shayātīn)* used to ascend to the heavens and listen to the conversations of the angels. They would then transmit the news of forthcoming events to the fortune-tellers, but would add many lies to it. These fortune-tellers would believe them because the news rectified from the angels would always materialise.

Allāh then denounces poetry and poets when he says, *"Only deviant people follow the poets."* This verse also replies to the other allegation made by the polytheists, when they said that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a poet. Whereas poets say things that are fictional, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم spoke

about reality to the people.

"Do you not see that they (poets) wander astray in every valley?"

They are ever searching for fiction to translate into poetry so that their followers can be happy.

"And that they say things which they never do?" Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that this verse was revealed with regard to polytheists poets who used to compose poetry to ridicule the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, trying to prove that they can also say what he said.

The lies, fantasies and exaggeration employed by poets is universally known. However, Allāh then states an exception when He says, *"Except those who believe, do good deeds, remember Allāh abundantly and avenge themselves after being oppressed."* These poets are not like those described above. Because of their Belief *(Imān)*, their involvement in good deeds and their excessive remembrance of Allāh, the believers *(Mu'minīn)* poets do not succumb to lying and their poetry serves to invite to Allāh and good deeds. Their poetry praises Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Whenever the disbelievers behave oppressively and criticise Islām, these poets are quick to retaliate and avenge Islām by composing poetry to combat these disbelievers. They will be rewarded for this poetry because it is composed to please Allāh and to defend Islām.

Sayyidina Hassān bin Thābit رضى الله عنه was a poet during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told him, "As long as you defend Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Jibr'īl عليه السلام remains constantly in your attendance." His poetry against the disbelievers was more severe than the piercing of arrows was to the enemy. [*Muslim*]

Bukhari reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had a pulpit erected for Sayyidina Hassān رضى الله عنه, from where he used to recite his poetry.

All deeds are judged according to the underlying intention. It is for this reason that, when asked about poetry, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "It is a manner of speech. The good that is in it is good, while the evil that is in it is evil." When the poem contains backbiting, slander and causes people to miss Salāh when engaged in it, it will be abominable and not permissible.

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"Shortly the oppressors will come to know to which place they will return."* This verse warns those people who assail the character of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and who falsify the Qur'ān. They will realise the error of their ways when they are cast into the depths of Hell.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

سورة النمل

Makkan	Surah Al-Naml	Verses 93

طسٓ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَكِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿1﴾ هُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿2﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿3﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿4﴾ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوٓءُ ٱلْعَذَابِ وَهُمْ فِى
ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمُ ٱلْأَخْسَرُونَ ﴿5﴾ وَإِنَّكَ لَتُلَقَّى ٱلْقُرْءَانَ مِن لَّدُنْ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿6﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Tā Sīn. These are the verses of the Qur'ān and a clear Book. (2) (It is) a guidance and a conveyor of glad tidings for the believers... (3).... Those who establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and are convinced with the hereafter. (4) As for those who do not believe in the Hereafter, We have beautified their deeds for them, so they wander blindly. (5) For such people there shall be a terrible punishment and they will be the worst losers in the Hereafter. (6) Undoubtedly, you are given the Qur'ān from the Wise, the All Knowing.

THE QUR'ĀN IS A CLEAR BOOK, REVEALED AS A GUIDANCE FOR THE BELIEVERS

The above verses begin Surah Naml. The word *"Naml"* means *"an ant."* The Surah has been thus named because of an incident of an ant mentioned in verse 18.

Allāh says, *"These are the verses of the Qur'ān and a clear Book."* This verse is similar to the opening verse of Surah Yusuf (*Surah 12*), where Allāh says, *"These are the verses of the clear Book."*

Allāh continues to say that the Qur'ān is *"a guidance and a conveyor of glad tidings for the believers."* Allāh then describes the believers by saying that they are *". . . those who establish Salāh, pay Zakāh (which are both focal pillars of Islām. Together with this they are also particular about the other aspects of Religion) and are convinced about the Hereafter."*

Although the Qur'ān is a guidance for all, it is especially beneficial for the believers *(Mu'minīn)* because they heed its advice and counsel.

"As for those who do not believe in the Hereafter, We have beautified their deeds for them, so they wander blindly." These people have strayed far from the straight path because they do not perceive the wickedness of their sins, but laud it.

"For such people there shall be a terrible punishment and they will be the worst losers in the Hereafter." Nothing that they possessed in this world can benefit them in the Hereafter, where all will be lost.

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Undoubtedly, you are given the Qur'ān from the Wise, the All Knowing."* The affinity Allāh has for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is sufficient for him to face the onslaught of the disbelievers and the polytheists.

إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِۦٓ إِنِّىٓ ءَانَسْتُ نَارًا سَـَٔاتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ ءَاتِيكُم بِشِهَابٍ قَبَسٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ
تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿7﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهَا نُودِىَ أَنۢ بُورِكَ مَن فِى ٱلنَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَسُبْحَـٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ
ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿8﴾ يَـٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿9﴾ وَأَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا
جَآنٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۚ يَـٰمُوسَىٰ لَا تَخَفْ إِنِّى لَا يَخَافُ لَدَىَّ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿10﴾ إِلَّا مَن
ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْنًۢا بَعْدَ سُوٓءٍ فَإِنِّى غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿11﴾ وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِى جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَآءَ
مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوٓءٍ ۖ فِى تِسْعِ ءَايَـٰتٍ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا فَـٰسِقِينَ ﴿12﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْهُمْ
ءَايَـٰتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا۟ هَـٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿13﴾ وَجَحَدُوا۟ بِهَا وَٱسْتَيْقَنَتْهَآ أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا
وَعُلُوًّا ۚ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَـٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿14﴾

(7) When Mūsa said to his family, "I notice a fire. I shall shortly bring you some news or a burning stake so that you may warm yourselves." (8) When he reached the fire, it was called, "Blessed be the one in the fire and the one in the vicinity of the fire. Allāh, the Lord of the universe is Pure." (9) "O Mūsa.' Verily I am Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise." (10) "Throw down your staff" When Mūsa عليه السلام saw the staff moving rapidly like a snake, he stepped back on his heels without looking back. "O Mūsa! Do not fear. Indeed, the messengers have no fear in My presence... (11) "Except the one who had done wrong, but then changed the evil with good. Verily I am the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful." (12) "Put your hand into your collar, it will emerge shining white without any ailment. These two are among the nine miracles with which you will go to Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his people. They are certainly a disobedient nation." (13) When Our miracles came to them clearly, they said, "This is manifest magic!" (14) They unjustly and arrogantly rejected them whereas their souls were convinced about them. So see what the outcome of the anarchists shall be.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام ARRIVES AT MOUNT TŪR, WHERE HE IS CONFERRED THE MANTLE OF PROPHETHOOD

The detailed account of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام has been discussed in the Surah TāHā [*Surah 20, verses 9-99*], as well as in Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 10-68*]. After ten years while Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was returning from Madyan, the night was extremely cold. In the distance he noticed what appeared to be a fire, but which was actually the celestial light of Allāh.

Describing the situation Allāh says, *"When Mūsa said to his family, 'I notice a fire. I shall shortly bring you some news* (about our route) *or a burning stake so that you may warm yourselves."*

"When he reached the fire, it was called (i.e. Allāh called), 'Blessed be the one in the fire [Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام] and the one in the vicinity of the fire (the angels). Allāh, the Lord of the universe is Pure (from all defects and partners)." Surah Qasas mentions that even the valley where the event occurred was blessed, and that the voice came from the right hand side of the valley.

Allāh then addressed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام further and told him, *"O Mūsa! Verily I am Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise."* Allāh then asked him about his staff (as mentioned in Surah TāHā), after which Allāh told him, *"Throw down your staff."*

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام threw the staff down, it turned into a snake. Allāh says, *"When Mūsa عليه السلام saw the staff moving rapidly like a snake, he (was afflicted with a natural fear and he) stepped back on his heels without looking back."* Allāh told him to grab hold of the staff saying, *"O Mūsa! Do not fear (the snake will return to its original form as a staff). Indeed, the messengers have no fear in My presence...*

Although Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was not told that he was to be a messenger in the above conversation, the fact is understood because Allāh spoke to him. The situation is similar to that of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, when Jibr'īl عليه السلام revealed the first few verses of Surah Alaq (*Surah 96*) to him in the cave of Hira. This was a sign of apostleship.

The phrase, *'indeed, the messengers have no fear in My presence...* also serves to announce the apostleship of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. At the same time, it describes an attribute of the Prophets عليهم السلام.

Allāh then added, *"Except the one* (i.e. the person who is not a Prophet) *who had done wrong, but then changed the evil with good* (by repenting, then his repentance will be accepted because) *Verily I am the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."*

Allāh further instructed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام by saying, *"Put your hand into your collar, it will emerge shining white without any ailment. These two are among the nine miracles with which you will go to Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his people. They are certainly a disobedient nation."* Because of their rebelliousness, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام required the support of these miracles to convince them. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام later received the other seven miracles over a period of time.

However, *"When Our miracles came to them clearly, they (refused to accept them and) said, 'This is manifest magic!' They unjustly and arrogantly rejected them whereas their souls were convinced about them."* Although they knew that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was the true Prophet of Allāh, they refused to admit the fact.

Instead, they challenged Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to a contest of magic, which he won. All the magicians then accepted his religion, but the others still refused because of their obstinacy. They were all eventually drowned. Allāh concludes the incident by saying, *"So see what the outcome of the anarchists shall be."*

Note: *"They unjustly and arrogantly rejected them whereas their souls were convinced about them."* This verse proves that merely being convinced about something without admitting it does not constitute Belief *(Imān)*. Belief *(Imān)* will be acceptable only when one admits to and accepts what he believes.

There are many disbelievers who believe that Islām is the true religion and that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is Allāh's messenger. In fact, they even write treatises in this regard and praise the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, they will not be called Muslims until they formally accept Islām.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَـٰنَ عِلْمًا ۖ وَقَالَا ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى فَضَّلَنَا عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥﴾ وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَـٰنُ دَاوُۥدَ ۖ وَقَالَ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا مَنطِقَ ٱلطَّيْرِ وَأُوتِينَا مِن
كُلِّ شَىْءٍ ۖ إِنَّ هَـٰذَا لَهُوَ ٱلْفَضْلُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٦﴾ وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَـٰنَ جُنُودُهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ
وَٱلطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَتَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ وَادِ ٱلنَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّمْلُ
ٱدْخُلُوا۟ مَسَـٰكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَـٰنُ وَجُنُودُهُۥ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ فَتَبَسَّمَ
ضَاحِكًا مِّن قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِىٓ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ وَعَلَىٰ
وَٰلِدَىَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَـٰلِحًا تَرْضَىٰهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِى بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِى عِبَادِكَ ٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

(15) Indeed We granted knowledge to Dawūd and Sulaymān. They both said, "All praise is because of Allāh Who has preferred us above many of His believing bondsmen." (16) Sulaymān succeeded Dawūd and he said, "O people! We have been taught the speech of the birds and have been granted everything. This is certainly a manifest bounty." (17) Sulaymān 's army of Jinn, men and birds were gathered for him and they were restrained. (18) Until, when they reached a valley of ants, an ant announced, "O ants! Enter your dwellings lest Sulaymān and his army trample upon you without realising." (19) Sulaymān began to smile and then laughed at her speech saying, "O my Lord! Allow me to express gratitude for Your bounty, which You have conferred upon me and upon my parents, and that I perform good deeds that You are pleased with. And, out of Your Mercy, include me among Your righteous bondsmen."

THE KNOWLEDGE AND BOUNTIES UPON SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام AND SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام AND THE INCIDENT OF THE ANT ADVISING THE OTHERS TO ENTER THEIR HOMES

Allāh says, *"Indeed We granted knowledge to Dawūd and Sulaymān."* They both had immense knowledge of Prophethood and of worldly sciences. Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام could mould iron with his bare hands and make armour from it. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام was granted kingship over the entire creation. Even the Jinn worked for him and constructed large buildings and utensils that were the size of dams. They also dived into the sea for him and extracted precious gems.

Both, father and son, said, *"All praise is because of Allāh Who has preferred us above many of His believing bondsmen."* They were both the Holy Prophets and kings. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام had control over every type of creation. Every creation of Allāh has a certain level of understanding and perception, even though man may not realise it. They are all equipped with senses whereby they are able to recognise friend from foe and to manage their affairs.

Allāh says further, *"Sulaymān succeeded Dawūd and he said, 'O people! We have been taught the speech of the birds and have been granted everything. This is certainly a manifest bounty."* Although Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام could understand all creatures; mention is made only of the speech of birds because the incident of the bird Hudhud is forthcoming. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام mentioned these bounties out of gratitude to Allāh.

Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام said that Allāh had preferred them above *many of His believing bondsmen."* He did not that they were preferred above all other *"believing bondsmen."* This illustrates that there were other Prophets عليهم السلام who were superior in status to Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام and Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام.

This statement also illustrates that the only criteria for status are Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds. No Muslim can therefore say that he is better than a certain disbeliever because a Muslim can never be compared to a disbeliever, who has no Belief *(Imān)* at all. Comparison can be drawn only between people of Belief *(Imān)* because, without Belief *(Imān)*, there is no good whatsoever in the disbelievers.

Allāh then describes the forces of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"Sulaymān's army of Jinn, men and birds were gathered for him and they were restrained."* This means that the army was so large that they had to be held back so that they do not break ranks. They would therefore proceed steadily with restraint.

Allāh then describes the incident with the ants, from which the Surah derives its name. Allāh says that Sayyidina Sulaymān's عليه السلام army marched on until *"they reached a valley of ants, (where) an ant announced, 'O ants! Enter your dwellings lest Sulaymān and his army trample upon you without realising.'"*

Understanding the speech of the ant, *"Sulaymān began to smile and then*

laughed at her speech saying, 'O my Lord! Allow me to express gratitude for Your bounty, which You have conferred upon me and upon my parents, and that I perform good deeds that You are pleased with. And, out of Your Mercy, include me among Your righteous bondsmen."

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a certain Prophet of Allāh عليه السلام once took his people out of town to pray for rain. As they emerged, he noticed an ant praying to Allāh with its feet in the air. Seeing this, he told his people, "Let us return. Our prayers have been answered because of this little ant." [*"Mishkāt" p. 132*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه also reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that an ant once bit a certain Prophet عليه السلام. He instructed that the entire community of ants be burnt on account of this. Allāh sent revelation to him saying, "On account of a single ant biting you, you burnt an entire nation of creatures who engage in glorifying me." [*Bukhari p. 467*]

While the Shari'ah permits killing harmful creatures, it is not permissible to burn them.

Abu Dawūd reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once noticed that an anthill was burnt. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked who had burnt it, the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم admitted that they had done so. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told them, *"It is only befitting for the Lord of fire to punish with fire."*

It is not permissible to kill ants unnecessarily. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that ants and bees are among the creatures that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prohibited from killing unnecessarily.

Note: *"Sulaymān began to smile and then laughed at her speech..."* This verse tells us that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام initially intended only to smile, but that he inadvertently laughed thereafter. Laughter is not encouraged in the Shari'ah and may only take place unintentionally.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never laughed in a way that his uvula became visible. He usually smiled.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه also narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always smiled rather than laughed. It was on rare occasions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم actually revealed his molars while laughing.

Of the advice that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave to Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه was that he should never laugh excessively, because excessive laughter kills the heart and extinguishes that light on one's face. [*"Mishkāt" p. 415*]

Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام made the prayer *(du'ā)*, *"O my Lord! Allow me to express gratitude for Your bounty, which You have conferred upon me and upon my parents..."* This teaches us to be grateful for the favours upon our parents as well because they are often the means whereby we attain Allāh's bounties. One of the greatest bounties that is conferred via one's parents is that of piety and righteousness.

لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُۥ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَاْذْبَحَنَّهُۥٓ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِّى بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿21﴾ فَمَكَثَ
غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ وَجِئْتُكَ مِن سَبَإٍۭ بِنَبَإٍ يَقِينٍ ﴿22﴾ إِنِّى
وَجَدتُّ ٱمْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿23﴾ وَجَدتُّهَا
وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ
ٱلسَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿24﴾ أَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى يُخْرِجُ ٱلْخَبْءَ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿25﴾ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ
ٱلْعَظِيمِ ۩ ﴿26﴾ ۞ قَالَ سَنَنظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿27﴾ ٱذْهَب
بِّكِتَٰبِى هَٰذَا فَأَلْقِهْ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَٱنظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿28﴾ قَالَتْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟
إِنِّىٓ أُلْقِىَ إِلَىَّ كِتَٰبٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿29﴾ إِنَّهُۥ مِن سُلَيْمَٰنَ وَإِنَّهُۥ بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿30﴾
أَلَّا تَعْلُوا۟ عَلَىَّ وَأْتُونِى مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿31﴾ قَالَتْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ أَفْتُونِى فِىٓ أَمْرِى مَا كُنتُ قَاطِعَةً
أَمْرًا حَتَّىٰ تَشْهَدُونِ ﴿32﴾ قَالُوا۟ نَحْنُ أُو۟لُوا۟ قُوَّةٍ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ وَٱلْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَٱنظُرِى مَاذَا
تَأْمُرِينَ ﴿33﴾ قَالَتْ إِنَّ ٱلْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا۟ قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوٓا۟ أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَآ أَذِلَّةً ۖ
وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿34﴾ وَإِنِّى مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِم بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَاظِرَةٌۢ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿35﴾
فَلَمَّا جَآءَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٍ فَمَآ ءَاتَىٰنِۦَ ٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّآ ءَاتَىٰكُم بَلْ أَنتُم
بِهَدِيَّتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ ﴿36﴾ ٱرْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّهُم بِجُنُودٍ لَّا قِبَلَ لَهُم بِهَا وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُم مِّنْهَآ
أَذِلَّةً وَهُمْ صَٰغِرُونَ ﴿37﴾

(20) When Sulaymān عليه السلام inspected the birds he said, "Why do I not see Hoopoe (Hudhud)? Is he among the absentees?" (21) "I shall surely punish him severely or slaughter him unless he comes to me with a good excuse." (22) It was only a short while thereafter when Hoopoe (Hudhud) said, "I have brought you news that you have no knowledge of. I have just returned from Saba with certain news." (23)"I have found a woman who rules over them and who has been given everything. She also has a magnificent throne." (24) "I found her and her people prostrating to the sun instead of Allāh. Devil (Shaytān) has beautified their deeds for them and prevented them from the right path, because of which they are not rightly guided." (25) "They do not prostrate before Allāh, Who can expose the hidden things in the heavens and the earth, and who knows what you hide and what you disclose. (26) "Allāh is the One besides Whom there is no other deity. He is the Lord of the glorious throne." (27) Sulaymān عليه السلام said, "We shall soon see whether you have spoken the truth or whether you

are from the liars." (28) "Take this letter of mine and throw it to them. Then turn away from them and see what reply they give." (29) She said, "O ministers! A noble letter has been thrown to me." (30) It is from Sulaymān and it says, "I begin with the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful." (31) "Do not be arrogant against me and come to me in submission." (32) She said, "O ministers! counsel me in my matter, for I shall never decide the case until you are present with me." (33) They replied, "We are people of great might and fierce fighters, but the matter rests with you. Therefore you decide what commands you wish to issue." (34) She said, "Verily when kings enter any town, they ruin it and humiliate its noble people. This is what they will do." (35) "I shall sent a gift to them and then see with what the messengers return." (36) When the messenger came to Sulaymān, he said, "Do you wish to assist me with wealth? What my Lord has given me is better than what He has given you. It is you people who are pleased about your gift." (37) "Return to them. I shall certainly march to them with an army that they will have no defence against. We shall definitely expel them thence in shame, while they are abased."

HOOPOE *(HUDHUD)* INFORMS SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام ABOUT THE QUEEN OF SABA AND HER PEOPLE AND THEN TAKES A LETTER TO HER

Since Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام had control over all types of creation, and they all formed his army, he used to keep a check on them. On one occasion, when he checked on the birds, he found Hoopoe *(Hudhud)* missing. (Hoopoe *(Hudhud)* could have been the leader of a certain species of bird).

Describing the scene Allāh says, *"When Sulaymān عليه السلام inspected the birds he said, 'Why do I not see Hoopoe (Hudhud)? Is he among the absentees? I shall surely punish him severely or slaughter him unless , he comes to me with a good excuse.*

"....it was only a short while thereafter when Hoopoe (Hudhud) (arrived and presented his excuse when he) said, 'I have brought you news that you have no knowledge of I have just returned from Saba with certain news. I have found a woman who rules over them and who has been given everything (that a ruler requires). She also has a magnificent throne. (However) I found her and her people prostrating to the sun instead of Allāh. Devil (Shaytān) has beautified their deeds for them and prevented them from the right path, because of which they are not rightly guided."

Continuing his speech, Hudhud describes what is the right path when he says, *"They do not prostrate before Allāh, Who can expose the hidden things in the heavens and the earth, and who knows what you hide and what you disclose. Allāh is the One besides Whom there is no other deity. He is the Lord of the glorious throne."*

"Sulaymān عليه السلام said, 'We shall soon see whether you have spoken the truth or whether you are from the liars. Take this letter of mine and throw it to them (in the royal court). Then turn away from them (but not too far away) and see what reply they give."

The queen read the letter to her ministers. It read, *"From Sulaymān. "Thereafter it continued, 'I begin with the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. Do not be arrogant against me and come to me in submission."*

It is learnt from this that a letter should commence with the writer's name,

followed by:

("I begin with the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."). This should be done even if the letter is addressed to a disbeliever.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wrote to Hercules. the emperor of Rome, he began the letter with his name and then the words:

From Muhammad, the servant of Allāh and His messenger. To Heraclius, the Emperor of Rome. Peace be on those who follow the guidance."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not write *"As Salāmu Alaykum"* (Peace be on you). He used the same words that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام used when he addressed Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* i.e. *'May peace be on those who follow the guidance."* This is so because it is not permissible to greet the disbelievers with *"As Salāmu Alaykum."* However, it is not necessary to even include this greeting. Therefore, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام omitted to write the same.

Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام commenced the letter with Allāh's name to inform them of Allāh, because they worshipped the sun. By including *"the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful,"* he alluded to the fact that Allāh will forgive them if they repent from polytheism *(shirk)*.

When the queen read the letter, she realised that the writer must be someone more powerful than her, because of the mode of address. She also realised that any foolishness on her part would lead to the destruction of her kingdom.

"She said, 'O ministers! Counsel me in my matter; for I shall never decide the case until you are present with me. They replied, '(We have nothing to be afraid of because) We are people of great might and fierce fighters, but (in the end) the matter rests with you. Therefore you decide what commands you wish to issue.

She told them that it was not suitable to rush into any decision before determining the strength of Sayyidina Sulaymān's عليه السلام forces. They needed to be cautious in the matter. Therefore, she said, *"I shall sent a gift to them and then see with what the messengers return."* With the excuse of delivering the gift, the messengers could assess the strength of Sayyidina Sulaymān's عليه السلام army and also ascertain what he wanted from them.

If the messengers informed them that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام was as powerful as he seemed to be they would not enter into any battle, but rather surrender themselves. In this regard she told them, *"Verily when kings enter any town, they ruin it and humiliate its noble people. This is what they will do."*

Eventually, *"When the messenger came to Sulaymān, he said, Do you wish to assist me with wealth? What my Lord has given me is better than what He has given you."* While the people of Saba had sovereignty and authority only over a piece of land and a limited amount of people, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام possessed sway over all creatures and springs of copper even gushed forth from the earth for him.

He also told them, *"It is you people (not me) who are pleased about your gift."* Then, addressing the leader of the envoys, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام said,

"Return to them (taking your gifts with). I shall certainly march to them with an army that they will have no defence against. We shall definitely expel them thence in shame, while they are abased."

قَالَ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِى بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَن يَأْتُونِى مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿38﴾ قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ أَنَا۠
ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن تَقُومَ مِن مَّقَامِكَ ۖ وَإِنِّى عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِىٌّ أَمِينٌ ﴿39﴾ قَالَ ٱلَّذِى عِندَهُۥ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِندَهُۥ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِن
فَضْلِ رَبِّى لِيَبْلُوَنِىٓ ءَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ ۖ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّى
غَنِىٌّ كَرِيمٌ ﴿40﴾ قَالَ نَكِّرُوا۟ لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنظُرْ أَتَهْتَدِىٓ أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿41﴾
فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَٰكَذَا عَرْشُكِ ۖ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ ۚ وَأُوتِينَا ٱلْعِلْمَ مِن قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿42﴾
وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَت تَّعْبُدُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِن قَوْمٍ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿43﴾ قِيلَ لَهَا ٱدْخُلِى ٱلصَّرْحَ ۖ
فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَن سَاقَيْهَا ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِّن قَوَارِيرَ ۗ قَالَتْ
رَبِّ إِنِّى ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِى وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿44﴾

(38) Sulaymān عليه السلام said, "O courtiers! Which of you can bring her throne to me before they come to us in submission?" (39) A giant of the Jinn said, "I shall bring it to you before you stand up from your place. Indeed I am strong and trustworthy for such a task." (40) The one who possessed knowledge of the Book said, "I shall bring it to you before you can blink your eye." When Sulaymān عليه السلام saw it placed firmly in his presence, he said "This is from the grace of my Lord to test whether I will be grateful or ungrateful. Whoever is grateful shows gratitude only for his own good. Whoever is ungrateful, then indeed my Lord is Independent, Bountiful." (41) He said, "Disguise her throne for her so that we may see whether she is rightly guided or from among those who are not guided aright." (42) When she arrived, she was asked, "Is your throne something like this?" She replied, "It seems like this is the very one. We were informed from before and submitted. (43) Sulaymān forbade her from what she worshipped instead of Allāh. She was certainly from a disbelieving nation. (44) She was told, "Enter the palace." When she saw it, she thought it was a pool of deep water and exposed her calf Sulaymān عليه السلام said, "It is a palace that is constructed from an array of glass." She said, "O my Lord! I have surely oppressed my soul. I submit with Sulaymān to Allāh, the Lord of the universe."

SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام HAS THE QUEEN'S THRONE BROUGHT TO HIM, SHE IS ASKED IF IT IS HERS, AND SHE FINALLY BECOMES A MUSLIM

After Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام sent the envoys back, Allāh inspired him with the thought that they would not want to fight him. He therefore requested

that her throne be brought to him. Some commentators say that he made this request after the queen and her people were already approaching him and the dust of their convoy was visible to Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. This he did to display his strength to them.

"Sulaymān عليه السلام said, 'O courtiers! Which of you can bring her throne to me before they come to us in submission?' A giant of the Jinn said, 'I shall bring it to you before you stand up from your place."' i.e. It will be present before you terminate this gathering. This will not be difficult for me; neither will I betray you, because *'indeed I am strong and trustworthy for such a task."*

"The one who possessed knowledge of the Book said, 'I shall bring it to you before you can blink your eye."' True to his word, he immediately had the throne delivered to Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. *"When Sulaymān عليه السلام saw it placed firmly in his presence, he said, 'This is from the grace of my Lord to test whether I will be grateful or ungrateful. Whoever is grateful shows gratitude only for his own good."* He *will receive the reward for his gratitude in both the worlds."*

On the other hand, *"Whoever is ungrateful, then* (it will not harm Allāh in the least because) *indeed my Lord is Independent, Bountiful."* Neither does a person's gratitude benefit Allāh, nor does it harm Him in any way.

Many opinions have been expressed with regard to the identity of *"The one who possessed knowledge of the Book."* The most famous opinion is that he was a person called Āsif bin Barkhiyya, who happened to be the son of Sayyidina Sulaymān's عليه السلام maternal aunt. He performed two rakāhs Salāh and then told Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام to look in the direction of Yemen. When Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام did so, he saw the throne before him.

Some commentator's say that the *"knowledge of the Book"* referred to the Ismul A'zam, which is a name of Allāh that guarantees acceptance of prayer's *(du'ā's)* after being recited. Others say that this refers to knowledge of the Zabūr. However, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام also possessed this knowledge because the Zabūr was revealed to his father, Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. The other members of his counsel must have also had knowledge of the Zabūr, which is renowned to have been comprised of prayers and recitations. The above has occurred to me without having read it in any book.

Another opinion is that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام himself was *"The one who possessed knowledge of the Book."* When the Jinn boasted that he could bring the throne before Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام could rise from his place, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام told him that he could do it before the Jinn could blink his eye. Other commentators say that *"The one who possessed knowledge of the Book"* was Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, and others maintain that he was Jibr'īl عليه السلام.

The verse merely mentions the presence of the throne and does not say that any journey was undertaken for the task. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that Allāh commanded the winds to transport it. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام did have control over the winds and Surah Saba mentions that he managed to travel a month's journey in a single morning or evening using the winds.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that the distance separating Sayyidina

Sulaymān عليه السلام and the queen's throne was equivalent to the distance between Kufa and Hīra. Other commentators say that the feat was accomplished when Allāh diminished the distance. Others say that Allāh created a tunnel through the earth for this purpose. And Allāh knows best.

When the throne was present Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام said, *"Disguise her throne for her so that we may see whether she is rightly guided (in recognising it) or from among those who are not guided aright."* Certain commentators say that some Devils *(Shayātīn)* told Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام that the queen's intelligence was defective, and that is why he tested her in this manner.

"When she arrived, she was asked, 'Is your throne something like this?' She replied, 'It seems like this is the very one. - Neither did she admit that it was her throne, nor did she refute it. Although she recognised it to be hers, she hesitated to admit it because she had left her throne well secured.

"We were informed from before and submitted." Many commentators are of the opinion that this is part of the queen's speech. She mentions that even before this exposition of Sayyidina Sulaymān's عليه السلام authority, she was already informed about his sovereignty, after which they decided to surrender to him.

Other commentators say that this sentence was spoken by Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام, who told the people that he was already informed from before that the people of Saba would surrender to them.

"Sulaymān forbade her from what she worshipped instead of Allāh." Keeping to the laws of the Arabic language, this verse can also be interpreted to mean that the things that the queen worshipped instead of Allāh forbade her from worshipping Allāh.

"She was certainly from a disbelieving nation." Her association with the people of Saba (who were all disbelievers) also influenced her to worship the sun. It often occurs that social customs and traditions prevent one from exercising one's intelligence.

"She was told, 'Enter the palace.' When she saw it, she thought it was a pool of deep water and exposed her calf" Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام also wanted her to see the extent of his sovereignty so that she does not regard her kingdom to be supreme. Therefore, he had a glass palace built before she arrived. He then had clear glass placed over the pond at the entrance. The glass was so clear that it was invisible. Thinking that she had to pass over water, she raised her dress, thus exposing her calf.

Seeing this, *"Sulaymān عليه السلام said, 'it is a palace that is constructed from an array of glass."'* *Totally astonished by what has transpired, she exclaimed, "O my Lord! I have surely oppressed my soul. I submit with Sulaymān to Allāh, the Lord of the universe.*

Note 1: None of the above verses of the Qur'ān state the name of the queen of Saba (Sheba). It is commonly understood that her name was Bilqīs.

Note 2: The Qur'ān is also silent about what happened after Bilqīs declared her Belief *(Imān)* in Allāh. However, it is known that she no longer remained as a ruler to her lands because her land came under the

kingdom of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام.

Note 3: Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has written that, when Bilqīs lifted her dress, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام turned his eyes away from her and said, *"it is a palace that is constructed from an array of glass."* This is typical of the behaviour of any pious person. They will never look at anything that they are not permitted to see.

Sayyidina Jarīr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed them to divert an unintentional glance. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not sustain your gaze after the first (unintentional) gaze because you will not be accountable for the first, but for the second." [*"Mishkāt" p.*]

Note 4: Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام returned the gift saying, *"What my Lord has given me is better than what He has given you."* By saying this, he cast a deeper sense of awe into their hearts so that they understand that his kingdom was much superior to theirs. In this way they surrendered to him without much hesitation.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has written that another reason for returning the gift was that it was a form of bribe. Had he accepted it, Bilqīs and her people would have been permitted to continue with their ways of polytheism *(shirk)* without restraint. It would have been an example of selling truth for falsehood.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to give and accept gifts, but always repaid the person who gifted him. The "Mu'atta" of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Shake hands and malice will be expelled. Give gifts and you will grow to love each other and enmity will disappear."

The Shari'ah encourages accepting gifts unless there exists some valid reason for refusing, like when the gift is actually a bribe or it is accrued by Harām means.

It has been reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sometimes accepted the gifts of disbelievers, and that he sometimes refused it. It is learnt from this that their gifts may be accepted when it is deemed appropriate, while it can also be refused when deemed appropriate. Of course, when the possibility exists that a disbeliever will accept Islām if his gift is accepted, it should not be refused.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَٰلِحًا أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ
يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ لَوْلَا
تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالُوا۟ ٱطَّيَّرْنَا بِكَ وَبِمَن مَّعَكَ قَالَ
طَٰٓئِرُكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ تُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَكَانَ فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَةُ رَهْطٍ
يُفْسِدُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قَالُوا۟ تَقَاسَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهُۥ وَأَهْلَهُۥ

ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِۦ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِۦ وَإِنَّا لَصَـٰدِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَمَكَرُوا۟ مَكْرًا وَمَكَرْنَا مَكْرًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَـٰقِبَةُ مَكْرِهِمْ أَنَّا دَمَّرْنَـٰهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَتِلْكَ بُيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِيَةًۢ بِمَا ظَلَمُوٓا۟ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَأَنجَيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

(45) We have certainly sent to the Thamūd their brother Sālih (to tell them) "Worship Allāh." However; they suddenly became two rival groups. (46) He said, "O my people.' Why do you seek to hasten evil before good? Why do you not seek forgiveness from Allāh so that mercy may be shown to you?" (47) They said, "We augur evil from you and from those with you." He said, "Your evil omen is with Allāh. You are but a nation that is being punished." (48) There were nine persons in the town who spread anarchy in the land and never repaired. (49) They said, "You should all swear an oath by Allāh that we will all stealthily murder Sālih and his family at night, after which we shall tell his successors, 'We were not present at the place where his family was killed, and we are certainly truthful.'" (50) They plotted a scheme while We plotted scheme without their knowledge. (51) So see what was the outcome of their plot. We annihilated them and their entire nation. (52) These are their homes that lie in ruins because of their oppression. There is definitely a sign in this for people with knowledge. (53) We rescued those who believed and who adopted Taqwa.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE THAMŪD AFTER THEY ILL-TREATED SAYYIDINA SĀLIH عليه السلام

When Sayyidah Sālih عليه السلام preached the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to his nation, only a few people who were regarded as the lower class in society accepted. The affluent people refused to accept. Allāh refers to these two groups when He says, *"We have certainly sent to the Thamud their brother Sālih (to tell them) 'Worship Allāh.' However, they suddenly became two rival groups."*

The dispute that existed between these two groups is mentioned in verse 75 and 76 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*), where Allāh says, *"The chieftains of his nation who were haughty said to those who believed from the weak ones, 'Are you convinced that Sālih has been sent by his Lord?' They replied, 'Indeed we believe in what he has been sent with.' Those who were haughty said, 'We definitely reject that which you believe in."*

Verse 77 of Surah A'rāf mentions that these arrogant people of the Thamūd said, *"O Sālih! Bring upon us that (punishment) which you threaten us with if you are really from the messengers."*

In reply to this Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام told them, *"O my people! Why do you seek to hasten evil before good? Why do you not seek forgiveness from Allāh so that mercy may be shown to you?"* He advised them to rather repent to Allāh and mend their ways before Allāh's punishment overtakes them.

However, his advice fell on deaf ears and *"They said, 'We augur evil from you and from those with you."* In saying this, they meant to blame him for the rivalry that began among them. "Ruhul Ma'āni" mentions that they were then afflicted by a drought, and they now blamed him and the other believers (*Mu'minīn*) for this.

Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام replied, *"Your evil omen* (i.e. the reason for your adversity) *is with Allāh* (i.e. known by Him). *You are but a nation that are being punished* (because of your disbelief and sins)."

The above verses teach us that a preacher of truth should not be hampered by the thought that he is splitting a community by preaching. There will always be opposition to the truth, which will inevitably cause division. He should continue with his task with dedication.

Allāh says further, *"There were nine persons in the town who spread anarchy in the land and never repaired."* These nine persons plotted to assassinate Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام. They convened and told each other, *"You should all swear on oath by Allāh that we will all stealthily murder Sālih and his family at night, after which we shall tell his successors (when they investigate), 'We were not present at the place where his family was killed, and we are certainly truthful."*

The people also earlier killed the camel that Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام miraculously caused to emerge from a mountain, even after he warned them, *"This camel of Allāh is a sign for you, so leave it to graze in Allāh 's land and do not afflict it with evil, for then a painful punishment will seize you."* [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 73*]

However, despite their plot to assassinate Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"They plotted a scheme while We plotted scheme without their knowledge."* Durrul Manthūr reports that when the nine thugs left to assassinate Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام, a boulder rolled down a mountain and crushed them all.

Eventually the entire nation was destroyed even though they lived in homes carved from mountains. They lay dead in their homes, as if they never lived there. Allāh says, *"So see what was the outcome of their plot. We annihilated them and their entire nation. These are their homes that lie in ruins because of their oppression. There is definitely a sign in this for people with knowledge. We rescued those who believed and who adopted Taqwa."*

When the nine anarchists swore to tell the successors of Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام that they were not present at the scene of the murder, the question arises how could there be any successors if his family was killed? Commentators say that the nine persons actually plotted to kill all the believers, who are termed as 'family.' They then intended to lie to the disbelievers relatives of these people. They had the same fear as the Quraysh had when they wanted to assassinate the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Quraysh feared that the Bani Hāshim would avenge the assassination.

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ أَتَأْتُونَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ وَأَنتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ أَئِنَّكُمْ

لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّن دُونِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ۞ فَمَا كَانَ

جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓاْ أَخْرِجُوٓاْ ءَالَ لُوطٍ مِّن قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ
(56) فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَهُۥ قَدَّرْنَٰهَا مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ (57) وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم
مَّطَرًا فَسَآءَ مَطَرُ ٱلْمُنذَرِينَ (58)

(54) We also sent Lūt (to his nation), when he told them, "Do you perpetrate indecency while you are in your senses?" (55) "Do you really satisfy your passions with men instead of women? You are but an ignorant nation." (56) The only reply that his people could give was that they said, "Expel the family of Lūt from your town. They are merely people who wish to be clean. (57) So We rescued him and his family, except his wife. We destined that she be among those left behind. (58) We rained a shower on them. Evil indeed was the shower of those who were warned.

THE NATION OF SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام REFUSED TO DESIST FROM THEIR LEWD ACTS AND WERE FINALLY DESTROYED

The detailed account of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and his nation has been discussed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 80-84*], Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 77-83*], Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verses 58-77*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 160-175*]. More shall follow in Surah Ankabūt [*Surah 29, verses 31-35*]. The nation of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام perpetrated the vile act of homosexuality. Disgusted with their behaviour, Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام told them, *"Do you perpetrate indecency while you are in your senses? Do you really satisfy your passions with men instead of women? You are but an ignorant nation."*

"The only reply that his people could give was that they said, 'Expel the family of Lūt from your town. They are merely people who wish to be clean." They said this mockingly.

Eventually, Allāh instructed Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام to leave the town at night, after which the disbelievers were all destroyed. Allāh says, *"So We rescued him and his family, except his wife. We destined that she be among those left behind."*

Describing the punishment, Allāh says, *"We rained a shower on them."* Surah Hijr mentions that the stones were hard baked clay, while Surah Dhāriyāt describes the stones as being made of mud. It may therefore be said that the stones were like hardened bricks.

Allāh concludes by saying, *"Evil indeed was the shower of those who were warned."* These people had been warned for a long time, but refused to heed the warning.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

PART TWENTY

قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَىٰ ۗ آللَّهُ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿59﴾ أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ مَّا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَن تُنبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا ۗ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿60﴾ أَمَّن جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا ۗ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿61﴾ أَمَّن يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿62﴾ أَمَّن يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَن يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَاحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ۗ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ ۚ تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿63﴾ أَمَّن يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿64﴾ قُل لَّا يَعْلَمُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۚ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿65﴾ بَلِ ادَّارَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهَا ۖ بَلْ هُم مِّنْهَا عَمُونَ ﴿66﴾

(59) Say, "All praise be to Allāh and peace be on those bondsmen of His whom He has chosen. Is Allāh better or those whom they ascribe as partners to Him?" (60) Or the Being Who has created the heavens and the earth and has sent rain for you from the sky? With it We grow gardens of splendid beauty. It is not possible for you to grow its trees. Is there another deity with Allāh? They are but a people who equate others with Allāh. (61) Or He Who made the earth stable, created rivers in its midst, placed mountains on it, and has placed a barrier between the two seas? Is there another deity with Allāh? Nay, but most of them are ignorant. (62) Or He Who responds to the distressed when he calls Him, averts evil and has made you vicegerents on earth? Is there another deity with Allāh? Little do you take heed. (63) Or the Being Who guides you in the darkness of the land and sea? And Who sends the winds as a conveyer of glad

tidings before His mercy? Is there another deity with Allāh? Allāh is Exalted high above what they ascribe. (64) Or He Who initiated the creation, Who will recreate it, and Who sustains you from the sky and the earth? Is there another deity with Allāh? Say, "Furnish your proof if you are truthful." (65) Say, "None in the heavens and the earth has knowledge of the unseen besides Allāh. They do not even know when they will be resurrected. (66) In fact, their knowledge is obsolete with regard to the Hereafter. Nay! They are in doubt about it. They are but blind to it.

THE GREAT ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH, HIS CONTROL OF THE CREATION, AND AN INVITATION TO ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)*

Allāh presents proofs of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* in these verses. Allāh begins by saying, *"Say, 'All praise be to Allāh and peace be on those bondsmen of His whom He has chosen."*

Thereafter Allāh poses a question by saying, *'Is Allāh better or those whom they ascribe as partners to Him?"* Even the polytheists realise that Allāh wields supreme power, and that their idols are helpless. Allāh then proceeds to illustrate His immense powers.

Allāh asks if the other gods are better *"Or the Being Who has created the heavens and the earth and has sent rain for you from the sky? With it We grow gardens of splendid beauty. It is not possible for you to grow its trees."* Allāh then asks, "Is there another deity with Allāh' The answer is understood that none can coexist as deity with Allāh.

However despite these facts, the polytheists *"are but a people who equate others with Allāh."* Another interpretation of this part of the verse is that they are a people who still wander away from the straight path.

"Or He Who made the earth stable (so that man and animal can walk on it), *created rivers in its midst, placed mountains on it, and has placed a barrier between the two seas* (thus separating the salty water from the sweet water)?" *Allāh asks whether He (Who possesses these qualities) is better than the false gods of the Polytheists. Allāh then says, 'is there another deity with Allāh? Nay, but most of them are ignorant."*

Allāh says that the earth is stable. This means that, under normal circumstances, the earth will not shake like other objects that are found on its surface. Of course, when Allāh wills that an earthquake should occur, even the largest mountains cannot be any obstacle.

"Or He Who responds to the distressed when he calls Him, averts evil and has made you vice gerents on earth?" People are successors of each other because each new generation assumes control from the previous generations. Allāh reiterates the question, *'Is there another deity with Allāh? Little do you take heed."*

Are the false gods better *"Or He Who guides you in the multiplicity of darkness of the ocean and sends the winds as a conveyer of glad tidings before His mercy* (i.e. before the rains)? *Is there another deity with Allāh? Allāh is Exalted high above what they ascribe."*

"Or He Who initiated the creation Who will recreate it, and Who sustains you from the sky and the earth? Is there another deity with Allāh? Say, 'Furnish your proof if you are truthful." Allāh challenges the polytheists to prove that any of their gods can match Allāh in any one of the above attributes. Without proof it will be foolish to adhere to their beliefs.

Allāh then declares, *"Say, 'None in the heavens and the earth has knowledge of the unseen besides Allāh. They do not even know when they will be resurrected."* This verse is a reply to those polytheists who demanded that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم inform them when Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will take place. This knowledge is exclusive to Allāh.

"In fact, their knowledge is obsolete with regard to the Hereafter. Nay! They are in doubt about it. They are but blind to it." Just as a blind person cannot see, these people are blind to the clear proofs furnished to them because of their obstinacy. While a person in doubt may hearken to the truth, the blind have no chance of this because the eyes of their heart are sealed against the truth.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَءِذَا كُنَّا تُرَٰبًا وَءَابَآؤُنَآ أَئِنَّا لَمُخۡرَجُونَ ﴿67﴾ لَقَدۡ وُعِدۡنَا هَٰذَا
نَحۡنُ وَءَابَآؤُنَا مِن قَبۡلُ إِنۡ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ﴿68﴾ قُلۡ سِيرُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ
فَٱنظُرُواْ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ﴿69﴾ وَلَا تَحۡزَنۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا تَكُن فِي ضَيۡقٖ مِّمَّا
يَمۡكُرُونَ ﴿70﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلۡوَعۡدُ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿71﴾ قُلۡ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ
رَدِفَ لَكُم بَعۡضُ ٱلَّذِي تَسۡتَعۡجِلُونَ ﴿72﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو فَضۡلٍ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ
أَكۡثَرَهُمۡ لَا يَشۡكُرُونَ ﴿73﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعۡلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمۡ وَمَا يُعۡلِنُونَ ﴿74﴾ وَمَا
مِنۡ غَآئِبَةٖ فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَٰبٖ مُّبِينٍ ﴿75﴾

(67) The disbelievers say, "When our forefathers and we have turned into dust and bones, will we be resurrected?" (68) "Our forefathers and we have been promised the same from before. These are merely tales of the old men." (69) Say, "Travel in the lands and see what was the plight of the criminals." (70) Do not grieve about them and do not be distressed about what they plot. (71) They say, "When will this promise materialise if you are truthful?" (72) Say, "Soon a part of the punishment that you sought to hasten will have afflicted you." (73) Without doubt your Lord is Most Bountiful towards people, but most of them are ungrateful. (74) Indeed your Lord knows what their hearts conceal and what they disclose. (75) Every hidden thing in the heavens and the earth is recorded in the clear book.

THE WARNING TO THOSE WHO REJECT THE ADVENT OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)* AND THEIR MISGIVINGS

After refuting polytheism *(shirk)* and proving oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*,

Allāh replies to those who refute the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"The disbelievers say, 'When our forefathers and we have turned into dust and bones, will we be resurrected? Our forefathers and we have been promised the same from before. These are merely tales of the old men."* The disbelievers claimed that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* cannot be true because it has not yet materialized.

Allāh replies by saying, *"Say, 'Travel in the lands and see what was the plight of the criminal is.'"* The disbelievers should see what happened to the other nations who refused to believe in the Hereafter. They were all punished for their disbelief, and such will be the plight of all other disbelievers.

Allāh then consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, *"Do not grieve about them* (and about what they say) *and do not be distressed about what they plot* (because Allāh will save you from them)."

After being told to travel and witness the plight of the previous nations *"They* (mockingly) *say, 'When will this promise materialise if you are truthful?' Say, 'Soon a part of the punishment that you sought to hasten will have afflicted you."* Commentators say that the partial punishment mentioned in this verse refers to the battle of Badr, where 70 polytheists were killed and another 70 imprisoned. Thereafter the punishment of death will follow, then the punishment of the grave and finally the worst punishment of the Hereafter.

"Without doubt your Lord is Most Bountiful towards people, but most of them are ungrateful." Allāh also bestows His favours upon the disbelievers and the polytheists. He even grants them respite to repent before afflicting them with punishment. However, man fails to appreciate these bounties, continues to sin and utilises these favours in all the wrong avenues.

"Indeed your Lord knows what your hearts conceal and what they disclose." This verse also consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the assurance that Allāh is well aware of the evil intentions that the disbelievers harbour against him and Allāh will save him from harm. This verse also warns the disbelievers that Allāh shall take them to task for all that they do.

"Every hidden thing in the heavens and the earth is recorded in the clear book (i.e. the protected tablet (Lawhul Mahfūz))." Allāh records all matters in the protected tablet *(Lawhul Mahfūz)* even though He has knowledge of the same. An account is even kept of peoples' deeds. Allāh will punish people for these according to His wisdom.

إِنَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ يَقُصُّ عَلَىٰ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَكْثَرَ ٱلَّذِى هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿76﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿77﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِى بَيْنَهُم بِحُكْمِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿78﴾ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَى ٱلْحَقِّ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿79﴾

(76) Verily this Qur'ān relates to the Bani Isrā'īl most of the matters about which they differ. (77) Indeed it is a guidance and a mercy for the believers. (78) Without doubt Allāh will decide between them according to His decree. He is

the Mighty, The All Knowing. (79) So rely on Allāh. Undoubtedly you are upon the manifest truth.

THE QUR'ĀN EXPLAINS WHAT THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL DIFFERED IN

Allāh says, *"Verily this Qur'ān* (clearly) *relates to the Bani Isrā'īl most of the matters about which they differ."* The Qur'ān explains to them the matters which they altered in their scriptures and which were hearsay.

One of these matters is that they believed that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was a Jew or a Christian. Allāh tells them *"Ibrahīm عليه السلام was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one abiding to the truth and subservient, never from the idolaters."* [*Surah Āl Imrān (3), verse 67*]

They also claimed that camel meat was unlawful *(Harām)* in the religion of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Allāh refutes their claim in verse 93 of Surah Āl Imrān (Surah 3), saying that all types of food were permissible for them.

Another claim that they made was that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام advised their children to be Jews. Allāh replies to them in verse 132 of Surah Baqarah, telling them that these two Prophets عليهما السلام advised their children to be Muslims.

The Qur'ān also dispels the erroneous beliefs that they held regarding Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. The Qur'ān makes it clear that she was chaste and that he was not Allāh's son.

Allāh then says about the Qur'ān that *'Indeed it is a guidance and a mercy for the believers (because they believe in it and carry out its injunctions)."* Although the Qur'ān is also a guidance and mercy for the disbelievers, they do not believe in it, thereby being deprived of its blessings.

"Without doubt Allāh will decide between them according to His decree (on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah),* thereby discerning truth from error). *He is the Mighty, The All Knowing."* None can lie to Him and nothing is hidden from Him.

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"So rely on Allāh. Undoubtedly you are upon the manifest truth* (therefore, do not grieve)."

إِنَّكَ لَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلصُّمَّ ٱلدُّعَآءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا۟ مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَمَآ أَنتَ بِهَٰدِى
ٱلْعُمْىِ عَن ضَلَٰلَتِهِمْ ۖ إِن تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَهُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

(80) Verily, you cannot make the dead hear, neither can you make the deaf hear the call when they turn away in aversion. (81) You cannot guide the blind from their deviation. You can guide only those who believe in our verses and who have submitted.

YOU CANNOT MAKE THE DEAD HEAR NOR CAN YOU GUIDE THE BLIND

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exerted himself greatly in propagating the

message of Islām. Although there were those who believed in him, many Polytheists adamantly adhered to their pagan beliefs. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was greatly distressed by this and wanted everyone to become Muslims. It was because of this that Allāh revealed the verse, *"Do not grieve about them and do not be distressed about what they plot."*

In the verses under discussion, Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in a different manner. Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that there are certain people whom he will never be able to influence because they have totally sealed their hearts with their obstinacy and rebelliousness. In fact, these people are so averse, that Allāh describes them as being dead, deaf and blind. Allāh says, *"Verily, you cannot make the dead hear, neither can you make the deaf hear the call* (especially) *when they turn away in aversion. You cannot guide the blind from their deviation."*

"You can guide only those who believe in our verses and who have submitted." This part of the verse makes it clear that the hearing and guidance mentioned in the above verse refer to responding to the truth, not simply hearing. Allāh terms hearing to be hearing only when it is of benefit to people. Allāh draws a similarity between these people and the dead because the dead are also unable to hear and respond.

CAN THE DEAD HEAR?

Even the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم differed in this matter. While many Sahābah رضى الله عنهم like Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه maintained that the dead can hear, others like Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها denied it. The above verse of Surah Naml seems to deny this concept. Verse 52 of Surah Rūm (*Surah 30*) also denies it in almost the same words, and Allāh says in Surah Fātir, *"You cannot make those in the graves hear."* [*Surah 35, verse* 22]

It should be noted that these three verses do not state that the dead cannot hear. They merely say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cannot make the dead hear. Therefore, although the dead may have the ability to hear, none has the power to make them hear his message.

Allāh says in verses 169 and 170 of Surah Āl Imrān, *"Never consider those slain in Allāh's way to be dead. Indeed they are alive, being sustained by their Lord. They are jubilant with what their Lord (Rabb) gives them from His bounty; and rejoice for the sake of those who have yet not joined them, who have been left behind, that no fear shall overcome them, nor shall they grieve."*

These verses prove that the dead martyrs have some sort of sense and perception. This means that Allāh does preserve the perception of certain souls, like the martyrs, in the grave. If Allāh so wills, He can preserve this perception within any other person as well.

An authentic hadith tells us that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whenever a Muslim passes by and greets the grave of someone whom he knew in this world, Allāh returns the soul of the deceased to his body so that he can reply to the greeting." [*Ibn Kathīr*]

This hadith proves that the dead are able to hear. However, it also proves

that only those whom Allāh permits that they should hear will be able to hear. While the hadith tells us that Allāh returns the soul of the deceased to this world to hear and reply to the greeting, one cannot deduce from this that other speech can be heard by them. They will be able to hear other speech only by Allāh's permission.

It is for this reason that great scholars like Imām Ghazali رحمة الله عليه and Imām Subki رحمة الله عليه have mentioned that while it is established that the dead do have the ability to hear, it cannot be said that they can hear everything that anyone says. While they may be able to hear at times, there are times when they cannot hear as well. Therefore, all the relevant verses and Ahadīth pertaining to this subject connect.

It is possible that they are able to hear only certain types of speech, or it may be that they can hear only certain people. Therefore, it will be incorrect to deny that the dead can hear, just as it would be incorrect to deny that they cannot hear.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has taught his Ummah to greet the deceased so that they may not be regarded as mere objects.

Muslim (*v. 1 p. 3 13*) reports that the deceased should be greeted with the following words:

When Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه was asked whether the dead can hear, he wrote in response, "There is evidence and opinions of the scholars that support both views. Who is then able to make a ratified decision? It is not even necessary that any verdict be passed on this issue to support one view and deny the other. Then too, there exists differences between those who support the view that the dead are able to hear. If any specific belief in this regard is asked about, perhaps a reply would be possible." [*Imdādul Fatawā v. 5 p. 379*]

(82) When the promise will be fulfilled upon them, We shall bring for them a creature from the earth, which will speak to them. People are not convinced about Our signs.

THE CREATURE FROM THE EARTH WILL APPEAR BEFORE THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

The Ahadīth have mentioned in great detail that the *"creature from the earth"* will be one of the major signs of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

Sayyidina Hudhaifa bin Usayd رضى الله عنه reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will take place only after the following ten signs have appeared:

(1) A smoke

(2) Dajjāl

(3) The creature from the earth

(4) The rising of the sun from the west.

(5) The descent of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام *from the heavens.*

(6) The emergence of Ya'jūj (Gog) and Ma'jūj (Magog).

(7, 8, 9) Sinking of the earth in three places ...... once in the east, another in the west, and the third in Arabia.

(10) The last of these will be a fire from Yemen that will drive people to the plains of resurrection.

Another narration states that the tenth sign will be a wind that will throw people into the ocean. [*Muslim v. 2 p. 393*]

The verse denotes that the creature will be extremely unique and peculiar. It will not be born like other animals, but will suddenly appear from beneath the earth.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that one of the last signs before Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will be the rising of the sun from the west and the emergence of the "creature of the earth" before the people during midmorning. Whichever of the two will appear first, the other will follow soon afterwards. [*Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When three signs appear, the Belief *(Imān)* of a person who has not believed before will be of no avail, neither will that Belief *(Imān)* be of avail that has not earned any good (i.e. the person has not repented for his sins). (1) The rising of the sun from the west, (2) the appearance of Dajjāl, (3) the emergence of the 'creature of the earth."' [*Muslim*]

The "Musnad" of Abu Dawūd Tiyālasi رحمة الله عليه reports the above hadith of Sayyidina Hudhaifa bin Usayd رضى الله عنه in some detail. It reports that the creature will make three appearances. The first appearance will occur in the rural districts and in Makkah, but the news will not spread at all. It will then disappear for a long time. When it appears the second time, the news will spread across the rural districts and throughout Makkah. On the third occasion, it will make its appearance in the Masjidul Harām, which is extremely sacred in Allāh's sight.

From between the Black Stone and the Maqām Ibrahīm, it will suddenly appear before all the people present there, screaming and dusting off its head. Many people will run far away in fear, but a group of believers *(Mu'minīn)* will remain where they stand, knowing that they cannot escape Allāh's decree. The creature will cause the faces of the believers *(Mu'minīn)* to shine like stars and will then turn away and travel the world with such speed that none will be able to catch it, neither will anyone be able to escape it.

To be saved from the creature a person will engage in Salāh. The creature will approach him from the back and ask him, "O person! You are performing Salāh now?" It will then leave a sign on his face. People will then engage in

partnerships and live together in cities, but the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will be clearly distinguished from the disbelievers by the markings that the creature will leave on them. The believer *(Mu'min)* will tell the disbeliever, "O disbeliever! Fulfil my right," and the disbeliever will tell the believer *(Mu'min)*, "O Believer *(Mu'min)*! Fulfil mine." [*p. 177*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the creature will emerge with the ring of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام and the staff of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. It will illuminate the faces of the believers *(Mu'minīn)* and place a seal in the noses of the disbelievers (by which they will be recognised as disbelievers). [*Tirmidhi*]

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَوْجًا مِّمَّن يُكَذِّبُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا
جَآءُو قَالَ أَكَذَّبْتُم بِـَٔايَٰتِى وَلَمْ تُحِيطُوا۟ بِهَا عِلْمًا أَمَّاذَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَوَقَعَ ٱلْقَوْلُ
عَلَيْهِم بِمَا ظَلَمُوا۟ فَهُمْ لَا يَنطِقُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا ٱلَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوا۟ فِيهِ
وَٱلنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

(83) The day when, from every nation, We will resurrect an army from those who deny Our verses, who will then be restrained. (84) Until the time will come when they will all arrive and Allāh will ask, "Did you deny My verses without possessing complete knowledge of them? In stead, there were other actions that you carried out." (85) The promise would be fulfilled upon them because of their oppression, so they will be unable to speak. (86) Do they not see that We have made the night so that they may rest in it and the day so that may see? There are certainly signs in this for the believing folk.

RESURRECTION ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* AND THE PUNISHMENT OF THE REJECTERS AFTER THEY ADMIT TO THEIR CRIMES

When all of mankind and jinn will be resurrected on the Plains of Resurrection, Allāh will separate *"an army from those who deny Our verses, who will then be restrained (to maintain order within their masses)."*

"Until the time will come when they will all arrive and Allāh will ask, 'Did you deny My verses without possessing complete knowledge of them?" Without attempting to understand the verses and pondering over their contents, they denied these. Allāh will ask further, *"Instead, there were other actions that you carried out (like assassinating the Prophets* عليهم السلام*, harming them and an array of other sinful deeds)."*

"The promise (of punishment) would be fulfilled upon them because of their oppression, so they will be unable to speak." At first, the disbelievers will come to Allāh (as mentioned in other verses) and will not admit their sins. Thereafter, their limbs will testify against them. After this condemnation, they will have nothing to say.

Allāh says, *"Do they not see that We have made the night so that they may rest in it and the day so that may see? There are certainly signs in this for the believing folk."* They can realise from the way in which Allāh raises them every morning after sleep that He can certainly raise them after death as well.

Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"Allāh claims souls at the time of their death, as well as those that do not die during their sleep. Allāh then seizes the soul for which death has been decreed, and releases others until their appointed term. There are certainly signs in this for people who think."* [Surah 39, verse 42]

وَيَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِي ٱلصُّورِ فَفَزِعَ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَكُلٌّ أَتَوْهُ دَٰخِرِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَتَرَى ٱلْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِىَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ ٱلسَّحَابِ ۚ صُنْعَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَتْقَنَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ مَن جَآءَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا وَهُم مِّن فَزَعٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ ءَامِنُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾ وَمَن جَآءَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي ٱلنَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

(87) The day when the trumpet will be blown and all within the heavens and the earth will be terrified, except those whom Allāh wills. They will all come to Allāh in humility. (88) You will look at the mountains, thinking them to be solid but they will be passing by like clouds. This is the doing of Allāh Who perfects everything. Indeed He is Informed of what you do. (89) Whoever brings a good deed shall receive something better. And they will be safe from the terror of that day. (90) Whoever brings a sin will fall on their faces in the Fire. "You are recompensed only for what you have perpetrated."

THE INHABITANTS OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WILL BE ALARMED BY THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPET, WHEN THE MOUNTAINS WILL FLY LIKE CLOUDS

The advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will be announced by the blowing of the trumpet by the angel Israfīl عليه السلام. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the trumpet is actually a horn that will be blown. [*Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "How can I live a life of pleasure when the blower of the trumpet has it in his mouth and is listening intently with his head lowered, eagerly awaiting for the command to blow." The Sahābah رضى الله عنهم asked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! What do you advise us?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Allāh is sufficient for us and He is the best Protecting Friend." [*Tirmidhi*]

The entire system of the universe will be thrown into mayhem when the trumpet is sounded. Allāh says, *"The day when the trumpet will be blown and all within the heavens and the earth will be terrified..."*

Allāh says in Surah Zumar that, when *"The trumpet will be blown, and everyone in the heavens and the earth will fall unconscious, save for those whom Allāh chooses."* Both the above verses refer to the first blowing of the trumpet. Therefore, when the trumpet is blown for the first time, the inhabitants of the universe will be terrified and will then fall unconscious. Then, by Allāh's will, *"Every soul shall taste of death."*

Certain commentators have mentioned that the state of terror described in the verse of Surah Naml refers to the second blowing of the trumpet. Therefore, when the trumpet is blown the second time to resurrect the dead, creation will be terrified. This interpretation is supported by the concluding words of the same verse where Allāh says, *"They will all come to Allāh in humility."*

However, the above verses of Surah Naml and Surah Zumar include an exception, where Allāh adds, *"except those whom Allāh wills."* This means that there will be certain individuals who will not suffer the terror or the unconsciousness.

"Durrul Manthūr" reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that these individuals will be the four angels Jibr'īl عليه السلام, Mika'īl عليه السلام, Israfīl عليه السلام and Izrā'īl the angel of death عليه السلام. The angels who carry Allāh's throne will also survive with these four but will die later.

Many verses of the Qur'ān describe the chaos that will reign on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Surah Ibrahīm states that on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah) "the earth will be changed into another earth, and the skies (will also be changed)."* Surah Takwīr (Surah 81), Surah Infitār (*Surah 82*) and Surah Inshiqāq (Surah 84) mention that the sun will lose its radiance, the stars will fall, and the oceans will be ignited.

Here, in Surah Naml, Allāh says, *"You will look at the mountains, thinking them to be solid but they will be passing by like clouds."*

Allāh says in Surah Qāri'ah, *"The day when people will be like scattered moths, and the mountains will be like flakes of coloured wool."* [*Surah 101, verses 4, 5*]

Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"When the earth shall convulse with violent earthquakes and the mountains will be shattered to pieces and become like scattered dust."* [*Surah 56, verses 4-6*]

Allāh says in Surah Hāqqa, *"When the trumpet will be blown once. The earth and the mountains will be lifted and reduced to smithereens. That day, the occurrence {Resurrection (Qiyāmah)} will take place. The sky will be rent asunder and will become weak."* [*Surah 69, verses 13-16*]

A verse of Surah Naba reads, *"The mountains will be made to fly and will be reduced to dust."* [*Surah 78, verse 20*]

Allāh says in Surah TāHā reads: *"They ask you about the mountains. Say, 'My Lord shall completely remove them, leaving the earth as a barren plain on which you will not see any protrusions, nor any depressions. On that day they will follow the caller before whom there will be no crookedness. Voices will be lowered before Rahmān and you will hear only the sound of footsteps."* [*Surah 20, verses 105-108*]

Certain commentators have mentioned that the mountains will be like dense clouds which people think are solid and stationary without realising that they are actually travelling.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the mountains will first be shaken by an earthquake, causing them to become like flakes of wool. They will then be reduced to dust and fly about. They will finally turn to ashes.

"This is the doing of Allāh, Who perfects everything." Just as Allāh created the mountains to be solid and firmly entrenched where they stand, He has the ability to remove them from their locations and reduce them to dust. Every phase is by His doing. Therefore, the disruption of the universe should never be considered as a weakness.

"Whoever brings a good deed, shall receive something better." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه say that the *"good deed"* mentioned in the verse refers to the Kalimah of Islām viz. *"Lā Ilāha Illallāh."*

With regard to receiving something better, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that this Kalimah will bring good for the person by way of entering him into Heaven. Other commentators say that the reward will be Allāh's pleasure and seeing Him, which is much better than any deed that they could ever do.

If *"good deed"* refers to all good deeds, then the promise of *"something better"* will mean that the rewards for these deeds will be greatly multiplied. Allāh says in Surah An'ām, *"Whoever does a good deed will receive tenfold the like thereof"* [*Surah 6, verse 160*]

"And they will be safe from the terror of that day." Since the previous verse mentioned that all within the heavens and the earth will be terrified at the first blowing, this verse will refer to the second blowing. Some commentators mention that the *"terror"* referred to here is the terror that people will feel when they will be condemned to Hell.

Other commentators say that it refers to the terror that people will feel when death will be slaughtered in the form of a sheep, and the people of Heaven and Hell will be told that they will remain where they are until eternity.

"Whoever brings a sin will fall on their faces in the Fire." If the sin mentioned in this verse refers to all sins, then even the sinful believers *(Mu'minīn)* will end up in Hell for purification. However, their punishment will be much less than that of the disbelievers and finally they will be removed from Hell.

Other commentators say that the *"sin"* mentioned in this verse refers to disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)*. The verse will therefore be similar to verses 94 and 95 of Surah Shu'arā (*Surah 26*), where Allāh says, *"They will all be thrown headlong in there, together with those gone astray, and the entire army of Satan (Iblīs)."*

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that many times certain laws apply to a sector of a group, while others within the same group are excluded. Therefore, it is very possible that the sinful believers will not fall face-down into Hell.

The people of Hell will be told, *"You are recompensed only far what you have*

perpetrated (in beliefs and deeds)."

إِنَّمَآ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْبَلْدَةِ ٱلَّذِى حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُۥ كُلُّ شَىْءٍ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَأَنْ أَتْلُوَا۟ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ فَمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِى لِنَفْسِهِۦ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَقُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ سَيُرِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

(91) "I have been commanded to worship only the Lord of this city, Who has made it sacred and everything belongs to Him. And I have been commanded to be from the subservient ones." (92) "And (I have been commanded) to recite the Qur'ān." Whoever is rightly guided, is guided for his own benefit. As for those who go astray, then say, "I am only from the warners. (93) Say, "All praise is for Allāh. He will soon show you His signs, which you will recognise. Your Lord is not unaware of what you do."

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS TOLD TO ANNOUNCE THAT HE HAS BEEN COMMANDED TO WORSHIP ALLĀH AND BE SUBSERVIENT TO HIM

Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to declare, *"I have been commanded to worship only the Lord of this city, Who has made it sacred..."* Allāh has preserved its sanctity by instructing that its animals be not hunted, that its plantation be not cut, and that no life be taken there.

From the general sense of this verse, Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه has deduced that even if someone murders another person within the boundaries of the Haram, the murderer is not to be executed within the Haram. If he hides there, he must be forced to leave the Haram in some way, after which he should be executed outside the marked boundaries of the Haram.

"....and everything belongs to Him." Therefore, only He is worthy of worship.

"And I have been commanded to be from the subservient ones." One should be subservient to Allāh in all conditions, not only in matters that pertain to devotional acts. Worship includes carrying out all deeds that secure Allāh's pleasure.

"And (I have been commanded) to recite the Qur'ān." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was entrusted with the task of reciting the Qur'ān to himself as well as to others. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān that one of the tasks of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is that he *"recites to them His (Allāh's) verses."*

"Whoever is rightly guided, is guided for his own benefit." He will ultimately reap the greatest rewards in both the worlds by attaining various bounties, Allāh's pleasure and safety from Hell.

"As for those who go astray, then say, 'I am only from the warners. The Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cannot be responsible for people who deviated from the path. He was not entrusted with the task of making people believe, because this is beyond human capability. His duty was merely to preach the message. He will therefore not be accountable for those who do not accept after receiving the message.

Allāh says in verse 108 of Surah Yunus (Surah 10), *"Say, 'O people! Certainly the truth has come to you from your Lord. So whoever will be guided shall receive guidance only for himself Whoever will go astray shall only go astray to his own detriment. I have not been commissioned over you.'"*

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"Say, 'All praise is for Allāh. He will soon show you His signs, which you will recognise.* People asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them exactly when judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will take place. Here the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم tells them that they will soon see the signs of judgment day *(Qiyāmah),* from which they will realise that it is near. Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will occur only when Allāh decrees it.

*"Your Lord is not unaware of what you do. "*Allāh is well aware of every person's deeds and will grant them the due recompense.

سورة القصص

Makkan	Surah Al-Qasas	Verses 88

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

طسٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ نَتْلُواْ عَلَيْكَ مِن نَّبَإِ مُوسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا
يَسْتَضْعِفُ طَآئِفَةً مِّنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْىِۦ نِسَآءَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ
﴿٤﴾ وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُواْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ
ٱلْوَٰرِثِينَ ﴿٥﴾ وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَنُرِىَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُم مَّا
كَانُواْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Tā Sīn Mīm. (2) These are the verses of the Clear Book. (3) With the truth, We recite to you from the narrative of Mūsa and Pharaoh (Fir'aun) for those people who believe. (4) Verily Pharaoh (Fir'aun) glorified himself on earth and divided the people into many groups. He weakened a party of them and slaughtered their sons, while keeping their daughters alive. He was certainly from the transgressors. (5) We intended to favour those who were weakened on earth by making them leaders and making them successors. (6) And by granting them authority on earth and showing Pharaoh (Fir'aun), Hāmān and their armies what they most feared from these weakened people.

THE TRANSGRESSION OF PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* AND HIS OPPRESSIVE TREATMENT OF THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL

Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"These are the verses of the Clear Book. With the truth, We recite to you from the narrative of Mūsa and Pharaoh (Fir'aun) for those people who believe."* People are to learn a lesson from the narrative.

"Verily Pharaoh (Fir'aun) glorified himself on earth (in Egypt) *and divided the people into many groups. He weakened a party of them* (the Bani Isrā'īl) *and slaughtered their sons, while keeping their daughters alive."* Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* had weakened the

Bani Isrā'īl to such an extent that they could do nothing when his troops slaughtered their children.

It has already been stated in the commentary of Surah Baqarah that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was warned by astrologers that a child from the Bani Isrā'īl will put an end to his kingdom. To evade the situation, he instructed that all infant boys of the Bani Isrā'īl were to be killed. Allāh says that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun) "was certainly from the transgressors."*

"We intended to favour those who 'were weakened on earth by making them leaders and making them successors. And by granting them authority on earth..." Honour and sovereignty are in Allāh's control and He may accord these to whoever He pleases. Even though the Bani Isrā'īl were in a downtrodden position, Allāh elevated them and made leaders and kings among their progeny.

"and showing Pharaoh (Fir'aun), Hāmān (Pharaoh {Fir'aun's} advisor) *and their armies what they most feared from these weakened people."* Consequently, the day came when Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his army were destroyed in the sea and lost everything they had to the Bani Isrā'īl, as was predicted.

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ ۖ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِى وَلَا تَحْزَنِىٓ ۖ إِنَّا رَآدُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧﴾ فَٱلْتَقَطَهُۥٓ ءَالُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَـٰمَـٰنَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا۟ خَـٰطِـِٔينَ ﴿٨﴾ وَقَالَتِ ٱمْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ لِّى وَلَكَ ۖ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَنفَعَنَآ أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُۥ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَـٰرِغًا ۖ إِن كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِى بِهِۦ لَوْلَآ أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِۦ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِۦ عَن جُنُبٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١﴾ ۞ وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ ٱلْمَرَاضِعَ مِن قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُۥ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُۥ نَـٰصِحُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ فَرَدَدْنَـٰهُ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّهِۦ كَىْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَـٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

(7) We inspired Mūsa's عليه السلام mother (instructing her), "Nurse him. When you fear for his life, then place him in the river and neither fear nor grieve. We shall certainly return him to you and make him from the apostles." (8) So the family of Pharaoh (Fir'aun) picked him up to be an enemy and a source of grief for them. Indeed Pharaoh (Fir'aun), Hāmān and their armies were sinners. (9) Pharaoh's (Fir'aun's) wife said, "A coolness for my eyes and yours. Do not slay him. Perchance he may benefit us or we may adopt him as a son." They had no

knowledge. (10) The heart of Mūsa's mother was restless. She would have almost revealed his condition if We had not strengthened her heart to be from those with conviction. (11) She said to his sister, "Follow him." So she spied on him from afar without their knowledge. (12) We forbade all wet nurses to him from before and she [Mūsa's عليه السلام sister] told them, "Should I show you a family who will care for him on your behalf, and who will dote on him?" (13) So We returned him to his mother so that her eyes be cooled and so that she may not grieve. And so that she may know that Allāh's promise is true, but most of them do not know.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA'S عليه السلام MOTHER PLACES HIM IN A BOX ON THE RIVER, AFTER WHICH PHARAOH'S *(FIR'AUN'S)* FAMILY DISCOVER HIM

To safeguard his kingdom from being destroyed by one of the Bani Isrā'īl, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* commissioned spies among the Bani Isrā'īl, who would inform him of any boys being born among them. When a baby boy was born, the child was slaughtered.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was born, his mother grew very concerned about his safety. It was then that Allāh inspired her with the command, *"Nurse him. When you fear for his life, then place him in the river* (within a box) *and neither fear* (for his safety) *nor grieve* (over your separation). *We shall certainly return him to you and make him from the apostles."*

Placing her trust in Allāh, Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام mother did as commanded. As the box floated past Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* palace, his wife spotted it and had it brought to her. When she set eyes on the child, she was overwhelmed with affection for the boy. When she took the child in her lap, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* feared that this may be the same child whom the astrologers predicted would destroy his kingdom. He therefore intended to kill the child as well.

When Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* wife sensed her husband's intention, she said to him that the child would be *"A coolness for my eyes and yours. Do not slay him. Perchance he may benefit us or we may adopt him as a son."* When she convinced Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, they decided to look for a wet nurse to suckle the child. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* did not realise that the child was to be the source of his losing the kingdom. Allāh says, *"So the family of Pharaoh (Fir'aun) picked him up to be an enemy and a source of grief for them. Indeed Pharaoh (Fir'aun), Hāmān and their armies were sinners.* "Commentators have mentioned that they were destined to be destroyed at Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام hands because of the fact that they were all *"sinners."*

As all this occurred, *"The heart of Mūsa's mother was restless. She would have almost revealed his condition if We had not strengthened her heart to be from those with conviction."* If Allāh had not granted her the necessary courage, she would have made it known that her child was in the box. However, she was convinced of the truth of Allāh's promise to return him to her.

"She said to his sister, 'Follow him.' So she spied on him from afar without their

knowledge." Allāh inspired her to instruct Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام sister to follow the box downstream, which she did. Hidden from the sight of the Copts, she witnessed the entire scene.

When Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his wife tried to get the child to suckle from various wet nurses, the child refused to take to any of them. Seeing them perplexed about the situation, Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام sister told them, *"Should I show you a family who will care for him on your behalf and who will dote on him?"* When they agreed, she summoned Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام mother, from whom the child immediately suckled. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* agreed to let her have the child and grow him up, and even paid her a sum of one Dinār (one gold coin) daily for her services. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"So We returned him to his mother so that her eyes may be cooled and so that she may not grieve.*

"And so that she may know that Allāh's promise is true (i.e. so that her conviction may increase in Allāh), but most of them do not know." i.e. They do not know how Allāh showers His mercy on people and how He reverses the plots of oppressors.

Note: Some people have criticised the fact that Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام mother accepted remuneration for her suckling, which is supposed to be the duty of a mother. It should be noted that the Qur'ān does not mention this. Therefore, it cannot be verified beyond doubt. However, even if she did accept the wage, it was taken from a disbeliever without any deception. The fact that he paid the sum happily also creates permissibility for the act.

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ وَٱسْتَوَىٰٓ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿14﴾ وَدَخَلَ ٱلْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ هَٰذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ وَهَٰذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِۦ ۖ فَٱسْتَغَٰثَهُ ٱلَّذِى مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ عَلَى ٱلَّذِى مِنْ عَدُوِّهِۦ فَوَكَزَهُۥ مُوسَىٰ فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿15﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِى فَٱغْفِرْ لِى فَغَفَرَ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿16﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿17﴾ فَأَصْبَحَ فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ خَآئِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِى ٱسْتَنصَرَهُۥ بِٱلْأَمْسِ يَسْتَصْرِخُهُۥ ۚ قَالَ لَهُۥ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّكَ لَغَوِىٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿18﴾ فَلَمَّآ أَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَبْطِشَ بِٱلَّذِى هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَّهُمَا قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ أَتُرِيدُ أَن تَقْتُلَنِى كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًۢا بِٱلْأَمْسِ ۖ إِن تُرِيدُ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ جَبَّارًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُصْلِحِينَ ﴿19﴾ وَجَآءَ رَجُلٌ مِّنْ أَقْصَا ٱلْمَدِينَةِ يَسْعَىٰ قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱلْمَلَأَ يَأْتَمِرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ فَٱخْرُجْ إِنِّى لَكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ ﴿20﴾ فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا خَآئِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ ۖ قَالَ رَبِّ نَجِّنِى مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿21﴾

(14) When Mūsa عليه السلام reached his full strength and was perfectly healthy, We granted him wisdom and knowledge. Thus do We reward those who do good. (15) He entered the town at a time when its people were oblivious and found two men fighting. The one was from his people and the other was from the enemy. The one from his own people shouted to Mūsa to help him against the other from their enemy. Mūsa punched him and concluded his affair. He said, "This is from the works of Satan (Shaytān). Indeed he is an enemy and one who openly misleads." (16) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! I have oppressed myself, so forgive me." So Allāh forgave him. Without doubt, He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful. (17) He said, "O my Lord.' On account of the favours you have bestowed on me, I shall never be among those who are accomplices to criminals." (18) The morning found him in the city, fearful and apprehensive, when suddenly the same person who cried for help the previous day began calling for his help. Mūsa told him, "You are clearly a misleading person. (19) When Mūsa intended to grab hold of the person who was an enemy to both of them, he (the Isrā'īli) said, "O Mūsa! Do you wish to kill me like you killed the person yesterday? You only wish to become a tyrant on earth and have no intention of becoming a reformer. (20) A man came running from the furthest end of the town saying, "O Mūsa! Verily the ministers are discussing about executing you. So leave. I am certainly a good counselor to you. (21) So Mūsa عليه السلام left the town in fear and apprehension. He said, "O my Lord! Save me from the oppressive nation."

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام MISTAKENLY KILLS A PERSON AND IS FORCED TO LEAVE EGYPT FOR MADYAN

Since Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was destined to be the Holy Prophet, Allāh imbued him with certain qualities before he left Egypt. Allāh says, *"When Mūsa عليه السلام reached his full strength and was perfectly healthy, We granted him wisdom and knowledge* (i.e. perfect intellect and understanding). *Thus do We reward those who do good."*

Allāh then relates the incident of how Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام unintentionally killed a Copt. Allāh says, *"He entered the town* (another small village outside the city) *at a time when its people were oblivious* (during the time of siesta) *and found two men fighting. The one was from his people* (from the Bani Isrā'īl) *and the other was from the enemy* {a Copt from Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* people}. *The one from his own people shouted to Mūsa to help him against the other from their enemy. Mūsa punched him* (the Copt) *and concluded his affair."* Because of his strength, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام unintentionally killed the person with his punch.

Extremely remorseful at his mistake, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام immediately said, *"This is from the works of Satan (Shaytān). Indeed he is an enemy and one who openly misleads."* He then submitted to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! I have oppressed myself so forgive me.' So Allāh forgave him. Without doubt, He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."*

It is the practice of upright people to always seek Allāh's forgiveness for any deed that they deem to be improper. There was no Shari'ah at that time and hence no question of blood money arose. It was therefore only necessary for him

to seek Allāh's forgiveness for his error.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام also submitted to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! On account of the favours you have bestowed on me, I shall never be among those who are accomplices to criminals."* He pledged never to assist in sins. This would also include never assisting Satan *(Shaytān)*, whose objective is to lead people to sin. This means that he would never respond to the enticement of Satan *(Shaytān)* since this would be assisting him.

This verse denotes that assisting someone in sin is as bad as committing the sin. People are generally negligent of this and become agents in various sins. By working in institutions dealing in usury and bribery, they are actually acting as accomplices to these sins. Working for oppressive governments also falls into this category.

Sayyidina Ka'b bin Ujra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told them, "I wish Allāh's protection for you against the rule of fools." When the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم asked who these people were, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"They will be such rulers after me that the person who believes their lies and assists them in their tyranny is not from me and will have no relation to me. They will never reach me at the Howdh (a cistern pond)."* [*"Mishkāt" p.* 322]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that the person who assists a tyrant, knowing that he is a tyrant, has come out of the fold of Islām. [*"Mishkāt" p. 436*]

Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who oppressively collects taxes will not enter Heaven. [*"Mishkāt" p.* 322]

Every type of employment in which one oppresses others or assist oppressors is unlawful *(Harām)*. Muslims working in such establishments should contemplate their situation and redress the wrongs.

Even though Allāh forgave Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, he will still be apprehensive to intercede on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, saying that he killed a person whom he was not commanded to kill.

"The morning found him in the city, fearful and apprehensive (that he may be arrested and executed), when suddenly the same person who cried for help the previous day began calling for his help (against another Copt with whom he was fighting). (Seeing him in trouble a second time, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام scolded him and) *Mūsa told him, 'You are clearly a misleading person."*

"When Mūsa intended to grab hold of the person who was an enemy to both of them (the Copt), he (the Isrā'īli, thinking that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was about to grab him for picking another fight) said, 'O Mūsa! Do you wish to kill me like you killed the person yesterday? You only wish to become a tyrant on earth and have no intention of becoming a reformer."

Commentators have reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام forgot to say *"Insha Allāh"* (If Allāh wills) when he said earlier, *"I shall never be among those who are accomplices to criminals."* It is for this reason that he again ended up being an accomplice to the mischievous

person from the Bani Isrā'īl.

When the Copt heard what the Isrā'īli said, he informed pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his ministers about the murder, and hence they decided to execute Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

"A man [probably from among pharaoh's (Fir'aun's) courtiers, who had faith in Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام] came running from the furthest end of the town saying, 'O Mūsa! Verily the ministers are discussing about executing you. So leave. I am certainly a good counsellor to you."

In response to this warning, 'Mūsa عليه السلام left the town in fear and apprehension. He said, 'O my Lord! Save me from the oppressive nation."'

وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تِلْقَاءَ مَدْيَنَ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبِّي أَن يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ (22) وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ
مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةً مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ وَوَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ
تَذُودَانِ ۖ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا ۖ قَالَتَا لَا نَسْقِي حَتَّىٰ يُصْدِرَ الرِّعَاءُ ۖ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ
(23) فَسَقَىٰ لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّىٰ إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ
(24) فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ
مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا ۚ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ الْقَصَصَ قَالَ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ نَجَوْتَ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ
الظَّالِمِينَ (25) قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا أَبَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ ۖ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ
الْأَمِينُ (26) قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَىٰ أَن تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَانِيَ
حِجَجٍ ۖ فَإِنْ أَتْمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِندِكَ ۖ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَيْكَ ۚ سَتَجِدُنِي
إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (27) قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ ۖ أَيَّمَا الْأَجَلَيْنِ قَضَيْتُ
فَلَا عُدْوَانَ عَلَيَّ ۖ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ (28)

(22) When Mūsa turned to the direction of Madyan, he said, "I have hope that my Lord will guide me to the straight path." (23) When he reached the water of Madyan, he found a group of people watering (their flocks). He also noticed two ladies keeping their distance. He asked, "What ails you two?" They replied, "We cannot water (our flock) until the shepherds return. Our father is an extremely old man. (24) So Mūsa watered (their flock) on their behalf and then turned to some shade saying, "O my Lord! Indeed I am needy of whatever good you bestow on me." (25) One of the two ladies came to him walking bashfully. She said, "My father is calling you to reward you for watering (our flock) for us. When Mūsa came to the father and related the incidents to him, he said, "Do not

fear. You are safe from the oppressive nation." (26) One of the ladies said, "O father! Employ him. Indeed the best person you can employ is one who is strong and trustworthy." (27) He (the father) said, "I wish to marry you to one these daughters of mine on condition that you work for me for eight years. If you complete ten years, it will be your choice. I do not wish to impose upon you. If Allāh wills, you will find me to be among the righteous." (28) Mūsa said, "The matter is between the two of us. There should be no force on me with regard to whichever of the two terms I complete. Allāh is a Surety over whatever we say."

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام REACHED MADYAN AND ASSISTS TWO LADIES, AFTER WHICH HE MARRIES ONE OF THEM

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام left Egypt for a town in Shām (*syria*) called Madyan. Madyan was not ruled by pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and no document was required to travel in those times. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام had no guide and had never travelled that way before and did not know the direction. However, he trusted Allāh to guide him. Therefore, he said, *"I have hope that my Lord will guide me to the straight path."*

True to his expectations, Allāh guided him and he safely reached Madyan. *"When he reached the water* (well) *of Madyan, he found a group of people watering* (their flocks). *He also noticed two ladies keeping their distance."* The ladies were restraining their flock from mixing with the other flocks. They saw to it that their flock did not drink from the water of other flocks because the shepherds would then beat them away.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام asked the ladies, *"What ails you two* (Why are you standing aside)?' *They replied, 'We cannot water* (our flock) until *the shepherds return* (with their flocks to their fields. Then we will water our flock)." Before Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام could even ask them why they were doing the work of men, they replied by adding, *"Our father is an extremely old man."* Therefore, he was unable to do the work. Their silence after this phrase denotes that they neither had any brothers nor any husbands to help them.

"So Mūsa watered (their flock) on their behalf and then turned to some shade saying, 'O my Lord! Indeed I am needy of whatever good, you bestow on me. It is the trait of every believer *(Mu'min)* to turn his attention to Allāh when in good and adverse situations. The word "good" is general and refers to a vast array of things like satiation of hunger giving shelter, etc. Commentators write that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام ate only the leaves of plants on his journey to Madyan and was in an emaciated state.

When the two ladies reached home earlier than usual, their father asked the reason. They explained to him that someone had fed the animals for them, and also described Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to him. The father was appreciative and sent one of them to call Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"One of the two ladies came to him walking bashfully."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that she came with a cloth covering her face. "She said, *'My father is calling you to reward you for watering (our flock) for us."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام noticed her modesty and was himself modest [modesty is the natural trait of all the Prophets عليهم السلام. Therefore, he told her to follow him and inform him of the direction so

that each of them could be at ease.

"When Mūsa came to the father and related the incidents to him, he said, 'Do not fear. You are safe from the oppressive nation (because they have no jurisdiction here).'"

Furthermore, *"One of the ladies said, 'O father! Employ him (He can be of assistance in herding the flocks and in other tasks). Indeed the best person you can employ is one who is strong and trustworthy."*

By his physical appearance and the strength he displayed when watering the flock, she realised that he was indeed very strong.

Some commentators have reported that when the laides expressed their inability to give water to the flock until the shepherds had left, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام asked them whether there was another well in the vicinity. They told him that there was another well, but that it was covered by a heavy rock, which a few men could not move collectively. He asked them to take him there. When they led him to the place, he moved the rock with one hand. Thereafter, he gave water to the animals and covered the well again. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 20 p. 63*]

His trustworthiness was displayed by the fact that he walked ahead of the lady and was not lecherous. Accepting her suggestion, the old man said to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *'I wish to marry you to one these daughters of mine on condition that you work for me for eight years.* (I only require you for eight years, but) *If you complete ten years, it will be your choice. I do not wish to impose upon you. If Allāh wills, you will find me to be among the righteous* (in my dealings with you, for I will not cause you any harm or grief)."

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام realised that this was a result of his prayer *(du'ā)* because now he would receive not only shelter and a livelihood but also a wife. He therefore accepted the proposal adding, *"The matter is between the two of us. There should be no force on me with regard to whichever of the two terms I complete* (i.e. I should not be prejudiced if I were to complete only eight years). *Allāh is a Surety* (or Witness) *over whatever we say."*

Sayyidina Utbah bin Nuddar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once recited "Tā Sīn Mīm" (*Surah Qasas*) to them until he reached the incident of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commented, "Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام hired himself for a period of eight or ten years for the protection of his chastity and to fill his stomach." [Ibn Majah p. 176]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has reported several narrations in which it is proven that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام spent ten years in the service of the old man and also grazed his goats. [*v. 3 p. 386*]

The commentary of "Mawāhib Laduniyyah" reports that Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها once told her father, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that she and her husband, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, possessed only one sheepskin, which they slept on at night and on which they placed the camel 's feed during the day. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her, "O my beloved daughter! Be patient. For ten years, Mūsa عليه السلام and his wife shared only one garment (which they used to clothe themselves and to sleep on)."

If this narration is authentic, it would prove that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام

spent ten years in Madyan. Therefore, the doubt expressed in the narration above by Sayyidina Utba bin Nuddar رضى الله عنه is most probably a doubt on the part of one of the narrators.

Bukhari (*p. 369*) reports that Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمه الله عليه once asked Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه which of the two terms did Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام complete. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه replied, "The longer and better of the two (i.e. ten years). It is customary among Allāh's Prophets to practice what they say."

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that every Prophet of Allāh grazed goats. When the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم asked about himself, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that he also grazed goats for the people of Makkah in exchange for a few 'qirāt' (a type of currency equivalent to a sixth of a dirham)." [*Bukhari p. 301*]

Goats are weak animals and cannot be beaten when they skip about because of the danger of fracturing their bones. Therefore, the shepherd has to be extremely patient with them. Allāh made the Prophets عليهم السلام graze goats so that tolerance and patience be imbued in them. It was then possible to tolerate the harassment of the disbelievers.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNT

Note 1: The Qur'ān does not mention whether the old man fed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام or gave him any payment for the initial service of giving water to the goats. "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 20 p. 65*) reports that when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام arrived at the old man's home, he was sitting for supper. When he invited Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to join him, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said that he would not accept anything in payment of the service he rendered even if the payment filled the world. The old man told him that the food was not a payment, but it was traditional in their family to entertain guests. It was only then that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام ate the meal.

Note 2: Allāma *(Scholar)* Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has reported from Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه and other commentators that the old man was Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام. However, many commentators say that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was born a very long time after Sayyidina Shu'ayb's عليه السلام demise.

They have deduced this from a verse of Surah Hūd, where Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام told his people, *'And the nation of Lūt عليه السلام were not far off from you."* Since Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام lived during the time of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, it is not possible that Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام could be the father-in-law of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, who was from the latter progeny of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام grandson. Although it has been mentioned that Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام could have lived for a very long time, which could have allowed him to meet Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, this statement cannot be verified.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported from various commentators that the old man

of Madyan was Sayyidina Shu'ayb's عليه السلام nephew. His name has been cited as Athrūn, Hārūn, Marwān or Āwīd. Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه has reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that his name was Yathrib. Besides these there are many more opinions.

Although the author of Ruhul Ma'āni" and Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه are of the opinion that the old man was Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام, Allāma Ibn Kathīr and Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه say that this claim can be made only when an authentic hadith corroborates it, and there is no such hadith.

Note 3: The fact that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام accepted the old man's proposal without hesitation teaches us that one should not be ashamed to accept something of necessity. Even the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم grazes goats for a small sum. Many people feel it below their dignity to do tasks that seem menial, even though they have no alternative. They rather choose to suffer and accumulate debts than do such work, which could well alleviate their need. Allāh's pious servants do not behave in this manner.

Note 4: *"One of the ladies said, 'O father! Employ him. Indeed the best person you can employ is one who is strong and trustworthy.* By saying this, the lady recommended Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام as being fit and qualified for the task at hand. Every task requires a person who is capable of handling it well. The work of keeping accounts will require a person with knowledge of accounting, just as the work of construction will require skills of bricklaying, engineering, etc

Although the Arabic word "qawiy" has been translated above as *"strong,"* it refers to strength in physical, spiritual and mental capacities. The word "amīn" (translated above as *"trustworthy")* is also multifaceted. It refers to trustworthiness with finances as well as with time. The person who is 'amīn' will ensure that he completes the required time for which he is paid. He is also a person whose wife can trust him completely because he will never even look at another woman with evil intentions, let alone cheat on his wife.

It has become a trend nowadays for people to shun trustworthiness in employment. An employee will work diligently only when he is being watched. No sooner is the employer's back turned, then the employee is busy doing something else. People accept their full salaries even though they have not completed their work for the month. Some people absent themselves without a valid excuse, while others have someone else sign the attendance register on their behalf. All these constitute betrayal and cheating.

Employers should ensure that the person they employ must be qualified for the work and should not be satisfied with only academic qualifications. People should not be employed on the grounds of family relations or after accepting a bribe.

Note 5: It is learnt from the proposal of the old man that a woman's marriage should not be delayed when an appropriate partner is found. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports that from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the following three things must not be delayed:

1. Salāh, when the time has set in.
2. A funeral, when it is ready.
3. The marriage of a solitary woman, when her match is found. *["Mishkāt" p. 61]*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person whose religiousness and character pleases you proposes, then do not delay the marriage. If you fail to do so, there shall be rampant anarchy in the world." [*"Mishkāt"*]

Another lesson learnt from the old man's proposal is that a proposal from the father should not be regarded as a source of embarrassment. People are wrong to think so. Some even go to the extent of refusing to be representatives of their daughters in the marriage ceremony, even though they did not make the proposal. They wrongly feel that a woman may marry only when a man proposes by himself.

When Sayyidina Umar's رضى الله عنه daughter, Sayyida Hafsa رضى الله عنه lost her husband in a battle and had already completed her Iddah (waiting period after being widowed) when her father asked Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه to marry her. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه remained silent without accepting or rejecting. A while later, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه made the same proposal to Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه, who politely declined the offer. When Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه narrated the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he replied, "A person better than Uthmān will marry Hafsa and a wife better than Hafsa will marry Uthmān." Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself married Sayyida Hafsa رضى الله عنه and gave his daughter, Sayyida Kulthūm رضى الله عنه in marriage to Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه.

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه later apologised to Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه for not responding to his proposal, saying that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had already mentioned to him at that time that he intended to marry Sayyida Hafsa رضى الله عنه. Therefore, he did not wish to divulge something that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him in confidence. He added that if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not marry her, he [Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه] would have done so.

Note 6: *"I wish to marry you to one these daughters of mine on condition that you work for me for eight years."* It appears from this statement that a stipulated sum of money is not necessary as a dowry (mahr), but service may be a substitute for it.

According to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, a woman will receive the cash Mahr Mithal *(A dower in the force of family)* if a free man agreed to marry her in exchange of a dowry that will be paid in service instead of cash. Although the marriage will be contracted, he will not have to serve her because it will mean a reversal of rules.

However, the Shafi'ī school of jurisprudence has deduced from the above verse that it will be permissible for a man to marry a woman in exchange of service instead of a cash dowry. This deduction is not valid because the verse does not make mention of service being dowry. The condition of service was

another matter aside from the mahr, which we cannot even be certain existed in the time of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Apart from this, the service was owing to the old man, not to the lady. The old man said, *"on condition that you work for me for eight years."* The condition was not that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام work for the lady.

If it is accepted that the contract was in exchange of the dowry (and that dowry was incumbent in Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام Shari'ah as well), then too the marriage would be contracted because the dowry would then have to be paid by the father. He would have had to pay Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام wages to his daughter as her dowry. However, this would not have been necessary if she had waived the dowry altogether.

Note 7: The old man merely said, *"I wish to marry you to one these daughters of mine..."* without stipulating which daughter he was referring to. If someone objects by saying that marriage is not contracted without identification, the reply will be that the above verse merely contains the proposal. Of course, when the actual marriage took place, the woman was specified.

Note 8: The verse does not stipulate whether the old man received consent from his daughter to marry her. It would therefore be incorrect to deduce from this verse that a father may marry his mature daughter without her consent, as the Shafi'ī school of jurisprudence maintains. The authenticity of the Ahadīth from which they deduce this ruling has been critically questioned.

According to Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه, the consent of a mature woman is imperative before marriage, without which the marriage will not be contracted. When consent is asked from a virgin, her silence will denote consent However, a widow and a divorcee have to reply verbally.

The verse of the Qur'ān,...*prevent them not from marrying their husbands"* denotes clearly that a mature woman may contract her own marriage. However, if her guardian is caring and responsible, she should hand over the affairs of her marriage to him.

Note 9: *"I do not wish to impose upon you."* This statement meant that he did not wish to add to Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام responsibilities and also that he would not force him to stay on for another two years if he wished to complete only eight years.

"If Allāh wills, you will find me to be among the righteous." It is learnt from this that the employer should be kind and understanding. Neither should he tax the employee nor should he be harsh. He should overlook any faults and errors of the employee, if he needs to reprimand the employee, it must be done with kindness. Of course, the employee should also ensure that he fulfils the task at hand with diligence.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Pay the worker before his perspiration dries." [*Ibn Majah p. 176*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports the words of Allāh from the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, in which Allāh says that He will personally contest the following three persons on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*:

1. The person who betrayed a pledge made in Allāh's name.
2. The person who sold a free person as a slave and then devoured the money.
3. The person who did not pay his employee after extracting work from him. [*Bukhari p. 302*]

Note 10: Some commentators have mentioned that the old man's elder daughter was Layya and the younger one was called Safūra. It was Safūra who was sent to call Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. While some commentators say that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام married the younger daughter, others say that he married the elder one. Allāh knows best.

۞ فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى الْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِ آنَسَ مِن جَانِبِ الطُّورِ نَارًا قَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ
امْكُثُوا إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّي آتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿29﴾ فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِن شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ
مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَن يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿30﴾ وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۖ فَلَمَّا
رَآهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۚ يَا مُوسَىٰ أَقْبِلْ وَلَا تَخَفْ ۖ إِنَّكَ مِنَ
الْآمِنِينَ ﴿31﴾ اسْلُكْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ وَاضْمُمْ إِلَيْكَ
جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ الرَّهْبِ ۖ فَذَانِكَ بُرْهَانَانِ مِن رَّبِّكَ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ
كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿32﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلْتُ مِنْهُمْ نَفْسًا فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿33﴾
وَأَخِي هَارُونُ هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا فَأَرْسِلْهُ مَعِيَ رِدْءًا يُصَدِّقُنِي ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَن
يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿34﴾ قَالَ سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكُمَا سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ
إِلَيْكُمَا ۚ بِآيَاتِنَا أَنتُمَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكُمَا الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿35﴾

(29) When Mūsa completed the term and left with his wife, he perceived a fire. He told his wife, "Wait (here), for I see a fire. Perhaps I may bring you some news from there, or a brand from the fire so that you may warm yourself." (30) When he reached the fire, a call came from a tree on the right side of the plain, in the blessed piece of ground saying, "O Mūsa! Indeed I am Allāh, the Lord of the universe. (31) "Cast down you staff" When he saw it writhing like a snake, he turned on his heels without looking back. "O Mūsa! Come forward and do not fear. You are certainly among the safe ones. (32) "Thrust your hand in your collar

and it will emerge shining white without any disease. And, if you fear (that your hand will remain like this), attach your hand to your side. These are two signs from your Lord to Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his ministers. Verily they were ever a sinful folk." (33) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! I killed one of them and fear that they will kill me." (34) "My brother Hārūn is more eloquent in speech than me, so send him as an aide to me to commend me for I fear that they will falsify me." (35) Allāh said, "We shall shortly strengthen your arm with your brother and grant the two of you a power, in the presence of which they will never reach you. The two of you and those who follow you will be victorious with Our signs."

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام TRAVELS WITH HIS WIFE TO EGYPT AND ENROUTE IS CONFERRED WITH THE MANTLE OF THE HOLY PROPHETHOOD

After spending ten years in Madyan, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام left for Egypt with his wife, but lost his way. It was dark and cold as they approached Mount Tūr. As they drew closer, they saw what appeared to be a fire. Describing the scene, Allāh says, *"When Mūsa completed the term and left with his wife, he perceived a fire. He told his wife, 'Wait (here), for I see a fire. Perhaps I may bring you some news from there, or a brand from the fire so that you may warm yourself"*

"When he reached the fire, a call came from a tree (i.e. it appeared to come from the tree) *on the right side of the plain, in the blessed piece of ground saying, 'O Mūsa! Indeed I am Allāh, the Lord of the universe. Cast down you staff' When (he cast it down) he saw it writhing like a snake, he turned on his heels without looking back. (Allāh said him) 'O Mūsa! Come forward and do not fear. You are certainly among the safe ones."*

Showing Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام another miracle, Allāh said, *"Thrust your hand in you collar and it will emerge shining white without any disease. And, out of fear* (of your hand remaining in this condition), *attach your hand to your side* (after which it will return to normal). *These* (the staff and the hand) *are two signs from your Lord to pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his ministers.* (So go and preach the truth to them) *Verily they were ever a sinful folk."*

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام then proposed two requests to Allāh. The first was when he said, *"O my Lord! I killed one of them and fear that they will kill me."* The second was that the required someone to assist him in the task. Therefore, he said to Allāh, *"My brother Hārūn is more eloquent in speech than me, so send him as an aide to me to commend me. I fear that they will falsify me."*

Allāh accepted this supplication of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and made Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام, who was in Egypt, a Prophet before Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام could reach Egypt. Therefore, Allāh replied to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام by saying, *"We shall shortly strengthen your arm with your brother and grant the two of you a power, in the presence of which they will never reach you. The two of you and those who follow you will be victorious with Our signs."*

Note: The author of "Ma'āriful Qur'ān" writes that the *'fire"* was a manifestation of Allāh' s illumination, which appeared in the form of a fire. It appeared in this form because it is impossible for anyone to

see Allāh's actual illumination in this world, as Allāh told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"You can never see me."*

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم مُّوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ قَالُوا۟ مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّفْتَرًى وَمَا سَمِعْنَا
بِهَٰذَا فِىٓ ءَابَآئِنَا ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ (36) وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن جَآءَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ مِنْ
عِندِهِۦ وَمَن تَكُونُ لَهُۥ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلدَّارِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ (37) وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرِى فَأَوْقِدْ لِى يَٰهَٰمَٰنُ عَلَى ٱلطِّينِ
فَٱجْعَل لِّى صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّىٓ أَطَّلِعُ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّى لَأَظُنُّهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ (38)
وَٱسْتَكْبَرَ هُوَ وَجُنُودُهُۥ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَظَنُّوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا يُرْجَعُونَ
(39) فَأَخَذْنَٰهُ وَجُنُودَهُۥ فَنَبَذْنَٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ ۖ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ (40) وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا
يُنصَرُونَ (41) وَأَتْبَعْنَٰهُمْ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ هُم مِّنَ
ٱلْمَقْبُوحِينَ (42)

(36) When Mūsa came to them with Our clear signs, they said, "This is conjured magic, and we have not heard of such a thing among our predecessors. (37) Mūsa said, "My Lord knows best who brings guidance from Him and who will meet a favourable end in the Hereafter. Verily, the oppressors will never succeed." (38) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "O ministers! Besides myself, I know of no other deity for your people. O Hāmān! Kindle for me a fire on sand, then construct a tower for me so that I may get a peek at Mūsa 's Lord. I strongly feel that he is from the liars." (39) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his armies were haughty on earth without justification and thought that they will never return to us. (40) So We seized Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his armies, and cast them into the sea. See what was the plight of the oppressors. (41) We made them leaders who called towards the Fire. They will not be assisted in the Hereafter. (42) We set a curse after them in this world and on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), they shall be among the hateful.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام PREACHES TO PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* AND HIS MINISTERS

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام reached Egypt, he met with his brother, Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام. The two of them then went to pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, who was with his ministers, and presented the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to them. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام also displayed the two miracles to him, whereupon *"they said, 'This is conjured magic, and we have not heard of such a thing* (like a person being a Prophet) *among our predecessors.*

This was a lie because Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام lived in Egypt previously. Since they regarded Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام miracles as magic, they arranged a contest with the magicians of the time, as is mentioned in Surah A'rāf , Surah TāHā and Surah Shu'arā . pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his ministers also asked Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام a series of foolish questions because they did not want to believe him. These are also mentioned in Surah TāHā and Surah Shu'arā . When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام noticed that they were implacable, he said to them, *"My Lord knows best who brings guidance from Him and who will meet a favourable end in the Hereafter. Verily, the oppressors will never succeed."*

Certain commentators have mentioned that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was referring to the *'favourable end"* in this world. He therefore forewarned them about the fate they were to suffer when they would be eventually drowned.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام message to them was that Allāh has perfect knowledge about the people He chooses as messengers and will never send liars and magicians to preach His message of Tauhīd. He knows exactly who He is sending as a messenger and has promised his apostles a grand reward in both worlds.

When pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* realised that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام would not accept him as a deity, and that they could influence others as well, "pharaoh *(Fir'aun) said, 'O ministers! Besides myself I know of no other deity for your people.'"* Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said this despite knowing that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was truthful. A verse of Surah Bani Isrā'īl quotes Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام as telling pharaoh *(Fir'aun), "He replied 'You know very well that only the Lord of the heavens and the earth revealed these as eye-openers.* - [*Surah 17, verse* 102]

However, to divert peoples' attention, pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said, *"O Hāmān! Kindle for me a fire on sand (i.e. bake some bricks), then construct a tower for me so that I may get a peek at Mūsa 's lord. I strongly feel that he is from the liars."*

A verse of Surah Mu'min states that pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said, *"O Hāmān, build a tower for me so that I may reach the roads; the roads of the heavens so that I can have a close look at the deity of Mūsa. I strongly feel that he is a liar."* Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* made this statement to deceive the ignorant masses. No tower would be high enough to reach into the heavens. Little did they realise that his ambition would not reveal that Allāh does not exist, but rather revealed pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* helplessness. If he really were a deity (as he claimed), he would not have required a tower nor any stepladder or the effort to climb. He should have then merely willed his desire for it to occur. However, the people in pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)*presence were too overawed by his worldly power and authority to think for themselves or to address him.

The Qur'ān does not state whether Hāmān built the tower. However, Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has reported from Suddi رحمة الله عليه that Hāmān completed the construction, after which Fir'oun ascended and shot an arrow into the sky. The arrow returned with blood, upon which Fir'oun told the people that he had killed Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام lord.

When he said this, Jibr'īl عليه السلام struck the tower with his wing, shattering

it into three fragments. One fragment fell on a part of pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* army, killing thousands. The other fragment fell in the sea, while the third fell in a westerly direction. Every person who participated in the construction was also killed. Although Suddi رحمة الله عليه has reported this narration, he is also doubtful about its authenticity and writes thereafter, "Allāh is best aware of the authenticity."

Some commentators say that pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was only jesting when he asked Hāman to construct the tower. They comment that he said this in response to Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام statement, when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said, "(Allāh is) *The Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two; if you will be convinced."* He also told Fir'aun, *"He is your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers."*

Thereafter Allāh says, *"Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his armies were haughty on earth without justification and thought that they will never return to us. So We seized pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his armies, and cast them into the sea. See what was the plight of the oppressors."*

"We made them leaders who called towards the Fire {by enticing others to perpetrate disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)*}. *They will not be assisted in the Hereafter. We set a curse after them in this world (because all the believers will keep cursing them) and on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), they shall be among the hateful."*

With regard to the punishment pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his people will suffer, Allāh says in Surah Mu'min, *"They will be presented before the Fire morning and evening. And, on the day that Judgment day (Qiyāmah) will take place, (they will be told) 'Enter the people of pharaoh (Fir'aun) into the worst of punishments.'"* [*Surah 40, verse 46*]

Note: *"We made them leaders who called towards the Fire."* This verse denotes that the word Imām (translated above as *"leaders")* refers to leaders in evil, just as it refers to leaders in good. When people respond to the evil enticing of certain leaders, it may also be said that they are following their Imām. Therefore, one should not be deceived by thinking that certain sects are Muslims because their leaders are called Imāms. A person leading others to disbelief may be termed an Imām of disbelief, and a person calling others to polytheism *(shirk)* may be termed an Imām of polytheism *(shirk)*.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا ٱلْقُرُونَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ بَصَآئِرَ
لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿43﴾ وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ ٱلْغَرْبِىِّ إِذْ قَضَيْنَآ
إِلَىٰ مُوسَى ٱلْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلشَّـٰهِدِينَ ﴿44﴾ وَلَـٰكِنَّآ أَنشَأْنَا قُرُونًا فَتَطَاوَلَ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلْعُمُرُ وَمَا كُنتَ ثَاوِيًا فِىٓ أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ تَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـٰتِنَا وَلَـٰكِنَّا كُنَّا
مُرْسِلِينَ ﴿45﴾ وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ إِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلَـٰكِن رَّحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ

لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّآ أَتَىٰهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَلَوْلَآ أَن
تُصِيبَهُم مُّصِيبَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُوا۟ رَبَّنَا لَوْلَآ أَرْسَلْتَ إِلَيْنَا رَسُولًا
فَنَتَّبِعَ ءَايَـٰتِكَ وَنَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِنْ عِندِنَا قَالُوا۟
لَوْلَآ أُوتِىَ مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰٓ ۚ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ قَالُوا۟
سِحْرَانِ تَظَـٰهَرَا وَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا بِكُلٍّ كَـٰفِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِكِتَـٰبٍ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ
أَهْدَىٰ مِنْهُمَآ أَتَّبِعْهُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَـٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَكَ فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا
يَتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

(43) Verily, after We had destroyed the former generations, We granted Mūsa the book as an eye-opener for people and a guidance and mercy so that they may take heed. (44) You were never by the western side when We gave Mūsa the laws, nor were you among the witnesses to this. (45) However We created many generations, after which a long period of time passed by. You were not even a resident from the people of Madyan. You recite Our verses to them, and it is only We Who send messengers. (46) You were not beside Mount Tūr when We called, but you have been blessed with a mercy from your Lord so that you may warn a nation to whom a warner has not come before, so that they may take heed. (47) We would not have sent messengers if it were not for the fact that a calamity would afflict them on account of what their hands sent ahead causing them to say, "O our Lord! Why did You not send a messenger to us so that we could follow Your verses and become of the believers?" (48) When the truth came to them from Us, they said, "Why is he not given the like of what was given to Mūsa?" Did people not reject what was previously given to Mūsa?" They said, "Two magicians assisting each other," and they said, "We do not accept any of them." (49) Say, "Produce a book from Allāh better in guidance than the two of them, which I shall follow if you are truthful." (50) If they do not respond to you, then you should know that they are following only their whims. Who can be more unjust than the one who follows his whims without any guidance from Allāh? Verily Allāh does not guide an oppressive nation.

THE TORAH IS REPLETE WITH EYE-OPENERS, GUIDANCE AND MERCY

The above verses contain the following:

Firstly: There were many Prophets عليهم السلام before Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, who propagated the truth, sounded warnings and conveyed glad tidings. However, their nations falsified them, because of which Allāh destroyed them. It was only the remaining generations that grew to eventually become the Bani Isrā'īl to whom Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was sent.

Allāh says, *"Verily, after We had destroyed the former generations, We granted Mūsa the book as an eye-opener for people and a guidance and mercy so that they may take heed."* Allāh also says, *"However We created many generations, after which a long period of time passed by."* Eventually they lost what the Prophets عليهم السلام had taught them and Allāh sent more the Holy Prophets to teach them, culminating with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم."

Secondly: Despite being unlettered and deprived of the opportunity to study, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed people of the detailed accounts of the former nations. The fact that the Bani Isrā'īl accepted all these incidents testifies to the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could have known about them only through divine revelation.

Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"You were never by the western side when We gave Mūsa the laws, nor were you among the witnesses to this."* Allāh also says, *"You were not even a resident from the people of Madyan. You recite Our verses to them and it is only We Who send messengers."* i.e. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed people of these narratives by reciting the verses of the Qur'ān to them.

"You were not beside Mount Tūr when We called [to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام], *but you* (have knowledge about it because you) *have been blessed with a mercy* (of apostleship) *from your Lord."* Thereafter, Allāh cites the object of the revelation. Allāh says that it has been sent to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that he *"may warn a nation to whom a warner has not come before, so that they may take heed." The "nation"* referred to in this verse is the Arabs, to whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the first the Holy Prophet to be sent to them after Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام.

Thirdly: Allāh explains the reason for sending a Holy Prophet to people. Allāh says, *"We would not have sent messengers if it were not for the fact that a calamity would afflict them on account of what their hands sent ahead (i.e. on account of their sins), causing them to say, 'O our Lord! Why did You not send a messenger to us so that we could follow Your verses and become of the believers?"* Allāh sends Prophets عليهم السلام to people so that they can never offer the above excuse.

Fourthly: *"When the truth came to them from Us, they said, 'Why is he not given the like of what was given to Mūsa?'"* i.e. Why is the Qur'ān not a complete book like the Torah? The Polytheists of Makkah said this to the Jews.

Allāh replies by telling them, *"Did people not reject what was previously given to Mūsa?"* Not only did people reject the Torah, but they even went to the extent of saying that Sayyidina Mūsa and Hārūn عليه السلام are *'Two magicians assisting each other,' and they said, 'We do not accept any of them"* *If* the revelation of a complete book was required before people believed, why was it that people rejected the Torah, which was revealed all at once? By making such statements, the polytheists never meant to believe even if their requests were fulfilled. These were mere excuses.

Fifthly: *"Say, 'Produce a book from Allāh, better in guidance than the two of them* (i.e. the Qur'ān and the original Torah), *which I shall follow if you are truthful.'"* Here a challenge is issued to those who reject the Qur'ān and the Torah. They are challenged to write a book to compete with these two. It is obvious that they will

never meet the challenge and therefore they will have to accept the Qur'ān, which confirms the veracity of the Torah as well.

Thereafter, Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"If they do not respond to you (and they can never do so), then you should know that they are following only their whims. Who can be more unjust than the one who follows his whims without any guidance from Allāh? Verily Allāh does not guide an oppressive nation."* Only oppressors refute the truth after it has become apparent before them.

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ (51) الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِهِ هُم بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ (52) وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ (53) أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ (54) وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبْتَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ (55)

(51) We sent this Word repeatedly to them so that they may take heed. (52) Those to whom We have given the Book from before believe in it. (53) When it is recited to them, they say, "We believe in it. It is definitely the truth from our Lord. Indeed, we were subservient from before." (54) These people will be granted double reward on account of their patience. They resist evil with good and spend from what We have given them. (55) When they hear futility, they turn away from it saying, "Our deeds are ours and your deeds are yours. We greet you with peace. We do not wish to converse with the ignorant."

THOSE WHO BELIEVED IN THE PREVIOUS SCRIPTURES WILL RECEIVE A DOUBLE REWARD BY ACCEPTING THE QUR'ĀN

"We sent this Word (the Qur'ān) *repeatedly to them so that they may take heed."* This refers to the continuous succession of verses containing warnings, narratives, glad tidings, advice, etc.

Referring to the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)*, Allāh then says, *"Those to whom We have given the Book from before believe in it (i.e. in the Qur'ān). When it is recited to them, they say, 'We believe in it. It is definitely the truth from our Lord. Indeed, we were subservient from before.'"* When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah, many sincere Jews, like Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه, accepted Islām. There were also several Christians who accepted Islām, like Sayyidina Salmān Farsi رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Tamīm Dāri رضى الله عنه.

When Sayyidina Ja'far bin Abi Talib رضى الله عنه and others migrated to Abysinnia, they managed to convert the king (Najāshi) and many other Christians. When Sayyidina Ja'far رضى الله عنه returned to join the Muslims in Madinah, thirty-two Christians accompanied him, all of whom readily accepted Islām. They said that they were aware of the fact that the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was soon to arrive with a divine scripture.

Allāh then speaks further about the believers (*Mu'minīn*) who were formerly Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*) when He says, *"These people will be granted double reward on account of their patience."* Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضی اللہ عنہ reports from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that the following three groups of people will receive double reward:

(1) *Those People of the Book. Who believed in their Prophet and then also believed in Muhammad* صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم.

(2) *Those slaves who, together with fulfilling the errands of their masters, also take care to fulfil the obligations of Islām upon them.*

(3) *Those people who marry their slave women after educating them thoroughly.* [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 20*]

Allāh says that they will receive this reward *"on account of their patience."* This *"patience"* refers to a vast spectrum of things. It refers to fulfilling the religious duties of their former religion's, as well as following the rites and duties of Islām. It will also refer to the hardships and difficulties experienced after converting to Islām at the hands of other Ahlul Kitāb.

Allāh describes the believing Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*) as people who *"resist evil with good..."* i.e. they carry out good deeds after perpetrating sins, because of which these sins are forgiven. Allāh says in Surah Hūd, *"Verily good deeds obliterate evil deeds."* [*Surah 11, verse 114*]

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم told him, *"Fear Allāh wherever you may be, and follow up a sin with a good deed, by which the sin will be effaced. Associate with people of good character."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 432*]

Other commentators have interpreted *"resist evil with good"* to mean that the believers among the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*) immediately resort to repentance after committing any sin. More in relation to the other verses, certain commentators have interpreted *"resist evil with good"* to mean that they are not rude and uncivil to those who behave rudely with them. They do not take revenge, but rather overlook and forgive the wrong done to them. This is in keeping with a verse of Surah HāMīm Sajdah, where Allāh says, *"Resist with that which is best."* [*Surah 41, verse 34*]

Thereafter, Allāh describes another of their virtues when He says that they *"spend from what We have given them."* This is the standard quality of all Mu'minīn, as described in numerous verses of the Qur'ān.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that when the group of Christian converts accompanying Sayyidina Ja'far رضی اللہ عنہ saw the poor state of the Muslims in Madinah, they requested permission from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم saying, "Allow us to return to Abysinnia and bring along our vast fortunes to assist the Muslims." When the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم permitted them, they fulfilled their pledge and were a great help to the Muslims.

Describing them further, Allāh says, *"When they hear futility, they turn away from it saying, 'Our deeds are ours and your deeds are yours. We greet you with peace. We do not wish to converse with the ignorant.'"* The greeting of peace mentioned in

this verse is not with the same tone and intent as Muslims normally greet each other. It is rather used as a method of escaping from the unwanted company of those engaged in futile talks.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه reports (*p. 296*) from Sayyidina Urwa bin Zubair رضى الله عنه that the Abysinnian king Najāshi sent twelve people to meet the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Makkah. They all accepted Islām and, as they left the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم presence, Abu Jahl mocked them saying, "You people are real losers and are a miserable group. You have unhesitatingly accepted what Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم says and must surely be the most foolish group of riders." In reply to his babbling, they merely said, *"We greet you with peace."* They also added, *"We accepted true guidance when it came to us and have not deprived ourselves of good. Our deeds are ours and your deeds are yours."* Allāh quotes their reply in the Qur'ān.

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

(56) Verily you cannot guide those whom you love, but Allāh guides whoever He wills. He is best aware of those who are rightly guided.

ALLĀH WILL GUIDE WHOEVER HE WILLS

Guidance (hidāya) has two connotations. The first is called 'Irā'atut Tarīq,' and refers to pointing out the route. The second called 'Īsāl Ilal Matlūb' refers to actually delivering the person to the desired destination. Both these connotations are referred to in the various verses of the Qur'ān.

It should be understood that Allāh has outlined and pointed out the way to salvation for humanity and Jinn via the agency of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Therefore, the act of 'Irā'atut Tarīq' has been accomplished by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because he strove hard to convey the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to the people. Thereafter, it was left to the people to decide whether they will follow the guidance or not. It was not possible, nor necessary for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make people believe thereafter, i.e. he was unable to accomplish the task of 'Īsāl Ilal Matlūb.'

The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم uncle, Abu Tālib, assisted him greatly during his lifetime. He raised the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and even protected him against the polytheists of Makkah when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced his Prophethood. However, Abu Tālib never accepted Islām. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم learnt that Abu Tālib was on his deathbed, he hastened to the house and implored his uncle to recite *"Lā ilāha IllAllāh,"* adding that he [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] would be witness to this in the Hereafter.

The two polytheists Abu Jahl and Abdullāh bin Umayyah were also present at that time. They induced Abu Tālib to die rather as an adherent of the faith of his father, Abdul Muttalib. As the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم spoke to Abu Tālib, he told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he would have certainly pleased him by reciting the Kalimah of Islām (*"Lā ilāha IllAllāh"*) if he did not fear that the

Quraysh would ridicule him by saying that he did so out of fear. Eventually, he died without accepting Islām.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left the house in extreme grief, whereupon Allāh revealed the verse, *"Verily you cannot guide those whom you love, but Allāh guides whoever he wills. He is best aware of those who are rightly guided."* [*Muslim v. p. 40, Bukhari v. 2 p. 703*]

This verse proves that only Allāh can actually make a person believe.

وَقَالُوٓا۟ إِن نَّتَّبِعِ ٱلْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ نُتَخَطَّفْ مِنْ أَرْضِنَآ ۚ أَوَلَمْ نُمَكِّن لَّهُمْ حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا يُجْبَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ ثَمَرَٰتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ رِّزْقًا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿57﴾ وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍۭ بَطِرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا ۖ فَتِلْكَ مَسَٰكِنُهُمْ لَمْ تُسْكَن مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۖ وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ ٱلْوَٰرِثِينَ ﴿58﴾ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبْعَثَ فِىٓ أُمِّهَا رَسُولًا يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا ۚ وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِى ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿59﴾ وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَمَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتُهَا ۚ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿60﴾

(57) They say, "If we follow the guidance with you, we will be removed from our land." Have We not granted them a peaceful Haram, to which the fruit of everything is attracted as a provision from Us? However, most of them have no knowledge. (58) Many were the towns that We have destroyed, who boasted about their affluence. There lie (the ruins of) their homes, which were occupied only a short while after them. We have always been the successors. (59) Your Lord would never destroy towns until He sends a messenger to their capital, reciting His verses to them. We would never destroy towns unless their inhabitants were oppressive. (60) Whatever you have been granted are the assets and adornments of this worldly life. That which is with Allāh is best and eternal. Do you not understand?

A REFUTATION OF THE CLAIM OF THE MAKKANS THAT THEY WOULD BE EXPELLED FROM THEIR LAND IF THEY ACCEPTED ISLĀM

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes (*v. 7 p. 300*) that Hārith bin Uthmān bin Naufal bin Abd Manāf once told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "We know that you preach the truth, but we cannot accept your preaching because we fear that the Arabs will (oppose us and eventually) remove us from Makkah." Allāh replies to this statement by saying, *"Have We not granted them a peaceful Haram..."* This was merely a lame excuse because, although the Arabs were warmongers, they took care never to harm the people of Makkah because of the sanctity of the town.

Allāh describes Makkah further by saying that it is a place *"to which the fruit of everything is attracted as a provision from Us?"* Together with a peaceful existence, the people of Makkah always enjoyed abundant provisions.

Allāh addresses the Makkans in Surah Quraysh saying, *"They should worship the Lord of this House (Ka'ba) Who fed them in their hunger and granted them safety from their fear."* [*Surah 106, verses 3,4*]

"However, most of them have no knowledge." Most of the polytheists in Makkah did not realise that Allāh will still provide for them if they accepted Islām and would not allow their enemies to vanquish them.

"Many were the towns that We have destroyed, who boasted about their affluence. There lie (the ruins of) their homes, which were occupied only a short while after them." This verse tells that polytheists that their notion of being expelled after accepting Islām is fallacious. Islām does not bring destruction to people, but it is disbelief that destroys people, as occurred to the people of the past. When these people falsified the Prophets عليهم السلام, they were annihilated. It may have been only some travellers who used their structures afterwards as they passed by them. Otherwise, these structures served no purpose afterwards.

"We have always been the successors." Allāh is always the Master of everything and will still have control after the temporary owners of this world have passed away.

ALLĀH WILL NEVER DESTROY A TOWN UNTIL HE SENDS A PROPHET TO THEM

"Your Lord would never destroy towns until He sends a messenger to their capital, reciting His verses to them. We would never destroy towns unless their inhabitants were oppressive." It is only when the people of a town falsify the Prophet sent to them and when they excel in sins that Allāh punishes them.

"Whatever you have been granted are the assets and adornments of this worldly life. That which is with Allāh is best and eternal. Do you not understand?" In this verse, Allāh impresses upon peoples' minds that the splendour of this world is temporary. They should not be enamoured by it because it will lead them to reject the truth and enter them into Hell. They should rather turn their attention to the Hereafter and strive for it because it is everlasting.

"..... *to which the fruit of everything is attracted as a provision from* Us?" In this description of the Haram of Makkah, Ulema *(scholars)* mention that the produce of every tree and machine is implied by the word *'fruit"*. Therefore, every manufactured article will also find its way to the shores near Makkah, as is evident today as well. Annually, millions of people arrive in Makkah for Hajj and Umrah, yet there has never been a shortage of food and manufactured articles. The same may be said for Madinah, in favour of which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed to Allāh (as has already passed in the commentary of verse 126 of Surah Baqarah).

أَفَمَن وَعَدْنَٰهُ وَعْدًا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ لَٰقِيهِ كَمَن مَّتَّعْنَٰهُ مَتَٰعَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ هُوَ يَوْمَ

الْقِيَامَةِ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِينَ ﴿٦١﴾ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَائِيَ الَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ
﴿٦٢﴾ قَالَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ رَبَّنَا هَٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَغْوَيْنَا أَغْوَيْنَاهُمْ كَمَا غَوَيْنَا ۖ تَبَرَّأْنَا
إِلَيْكَ ۖ مَا كَانُوا إِيَّانَا يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ وَقِيلَ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُمْ
وَرَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ ۚ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أَجَبْتُمُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
﴿٦٥﴾ فَعَمِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَنبَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَهُمْ لَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ فَأَمَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَعَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُفْلِحِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

(61) Can the person who has realised the promise We made to him, be like the one to whom We have granted the pleasures of this worldly life, after which he will be from those to be apprehended and presented on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah)? (62) The day when Allāh shall call them saying, "Where are those partners that you ascribed to Me?" (63) Those against whom the decree shall be passed, will say, "O our Lord! These are the ones whom we have led astray. We led them astray just as we were astray. We seek exoneration from You. They never worshipped us." (64) It will be said, "Call your partners." They will then call for them, but they will not respond to them. They will also see the punishment. If only they were rightly guided. (65) The day when Allāh will call them saying, "What reply did you give to the messengers?" (66) All information will be lost to them on that day and they will not be able to ask each other. (67) As for him who repents, believes and does righteous deeds, it is expected that they will be from the successful ones.

ALLĀH WILL ASK THE IDOLATERS WHERE THEIR GODS ARE ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

Drawing a distinction between a believer *(Mu'min)* and a disbeliever, Allāh says, *"Can the person* {the believer *(Mu'min)*} *who has realised the promise We made to him* (i.e. of Heaven) *be like the one* (the disbeliever) *whom We have granted the pleasures of this worldly life, after which he will be from those to be apprehended and presented on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah)* (after which he will be assigned to Hell)', This verse warns the disbelievers and also advises the believer *(Mu'min)* by telling them not to be enamoured with the temporary pleasures of this world which the disbelievers possess.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a believer *(Mu'min)* must never envy any bounty enjoyed by a sinner because he can never know what awaits the person after death. Allāh has kept a punishment in store for him which never ends i.e. Hell from which he will find no escape.

"The day when Allāh shall call them saying, 'Where are those partners that you ascribed to Me?' Those {*devils (Shayātīn)*} *against whom the decree (to enter Hell) shall be passed, will say, 'O our Lord! These are the ones whom we have led astray. We led them astray just as we were astray (i.e. just like none forced us to do what we did, we*

never forced them). We seek exoneration from You. They never worshipped us (they worshipped their own whims instead).'"

Allāh describes the same scene in Surah Baqarah, where He says, *"When those who were followed disassociate themselves from those who followed them; and they see the punishment; and all ties between them are severed. Those who had followed will say, 'If only we could return (to the world), then we too will disassociate ourselves from them as they now do to us. In this manner Allāh will show them their actions as a cause of regret to them. They will never be able to escape from the fire."* [*Surah 2, verses 166, 167*]

Allāh continues to say, *"It will be said, 'Call your partners.' They will then call for them, but they will not respond to them. They* (the misguided and those who misguided others) *will also see the punishment.* (They will then wish) *If only they were rightly guided."* They will wish that they could save themselves from punishment, but this will be impossible.

"The day when Allāh will call them saying, 'What reply did you give to the messengers?' All information will be lost to them on that day and they will not be able to ask each other." They will be senseless on that day and will forget whatever they told the Prophets عليهم السلام.

Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"The day when Allāh shall gather the messengers and ask, 'What reply did you receive?' They will submit, 'We have no knowledge. Most surely only You are the Knower of the unseen.'"* Because of the awe of that day, even these Prophets عليهم السلام will be unable to give an accurate reply. Therefore, how can disbelievers and Polytheists be expected to give a reply when their situation will be much worse?

Thereafter, Allāh mentions those who accepted Islām. Allāh says, *"As for him who repents, believes and does righteous deeds, it is expected that they will be from the successful ones."*

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ ۗ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا
يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿68﴾ وَرَبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿69﴾ وَهُوَ اللَّهُ لَا
إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ لَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي الْأُولَىٰ وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿70﴾ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ
إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ اللَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ
بِضِيَاءٍ ۖ أَفَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ ﴿71﴾ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ النَّهَارَ سَرْمَدًا
إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِلَيْلٍ تَسْكُنُونَ فِيهِ ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ
﴿72﴾ وَمِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿73﴾

(68) Your Lord creates whatever He wills and selects. They have no choice. Allāh

is Pure and Exalted above all they ascribe as partner to Him. (69) And your Lord knows what their hearts conceal and what they reveal. (70) He is Allāh, besides Whom there is no deity. All praise belongs to Him in this world and in the Hereafter. All command is His, and to Him shall you all be returned. (71) Say, "Tell me. If Allāh makes the night perpetual for you until the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), which deity besides Him can bring light to you? Can you not hear?" (72) Say, "Tell me. If Allāh makes the day perpetual for you until the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), which deity besides Him can bring night to you, in which you may find peace? Can you not see?" (73) Out of His mercy, He has created the day and the night for you so that you may find peace in them, seek from His bounty, and express your gratitude to Him.

IF ALLĀH PERPETUATES THE DAY OR THE NIGHT, WHO CAN PREVENT HIM?

"Your Lord creates whatever He wills and selects. They have no choice. Allāh is Pure and Exalted above all they ascribe as partner to Him." Certain commentators have mentioned that this verse was revealed in response to the comment made by Walīd bin Mughiera, when he said that Allāh should have made an affluent person from Makkah or Tā'if a Prophet instead of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Referring to this statement, Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, *"They say, 'Why is this Qur'ān not revealed to a prominent man from one of the two cities?'"* [*Surah 43, verse 31*]

Other commentators have mentioned that the verse replies to a statement of the Jews who told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they would believe in him only if an angel besides Jibr'īl عليه السلام brought the revelation. Allāh emphatically states, *"Your Lord creates whatever He wills and selects."* i.e. Allāh will select whom He wills to be a Prophet and to bring His revelation. People have no choice in the matter.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه interprets the verse to mean that Allāh selects whoever He wills to be obedient to Him [Qurtubi]. Other commentators mention that Allāh selects which laws to pass with regard to religion *(D'īn)* and natural occurrences. None is partner to Him in any of these regards.

Even in Allāh's selection of Prophets عليهم السلام, He reserves the right to honour certain Prophets عليهم السلام above the rest, and to assign a larger number of followers to some instead of others. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام is regarded as Allāh's friend, while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is termed as "Allāh's beloved" and was also conferred the honour of meeting Allāh in Mi'rāj (*ascension*). Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was honoured enough to converse directly with Allāh, whilst Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is regarded as Allāh's 'spirit' and 'word.'

Similarly, Allāh chooses whichever angels He wills for whatever task He chooses. Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Allāh selects messengers from the angels and from mankind."* Allāh has also made certain gardens of Heaven better than others, Jannatul Firdous (*Garden of paradise*) being the best of these. Likewise, Allāh has given superiority to the Masjidul Harām above all other Masājid and declared a portion of the Masjidun Nabawi (*Mosque of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم) to be a part of the gardens of Heaven.

From the religious scholars, Allāh has accepted some for greater tasks of religion. While some were Muhaddithīn (*narrators*), others were Mufassirīn (*commentators*). While some had thousands of students, others founded educational institutions. There have been many whose books have been well received, while others did not write any books at all. In this manner, hundreds of examples can be quoted. The fact is that Allāh selects as He pleases. *"Allāh is Pure and Exalted above all they ascribe as partner to Him."*

Allāh continues to say, *"And your Lord knows what their hearts conceal and what they reveal."* Therefore, no person should think that none is aware of the evil he harbours in his heart.

"He is Allāh, besides Whom there is no deity. All praise belongs to Him in this world and in the Hereafter. All command (decisions) *is His, and to Him shall you all be returned."* Allāh will then reward or punish people accordingly.

Allāh then reminds people of His great bounty upon them. He says, *"Say* (to the disbelievers), *'Tell me. If Allāh makes the night perpetual for you until the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah), which deity* (of yours) *besides Him can bring light to you? Can you not hear?' Say, 'Tell me. If Allāh makes the day perpetual for you until the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah), which deity besides Him can bring night to you, in which you may find peace* (and rest)? *Can you not see?"'*

The benefits of having the day and night alternate as they do are too numerous to mention. Allāh states two of them when he says, *"Out of His mercy, He has created the day and the night for you so that* you *may find peace* (and sleep) *therein* (at night), *seek from His bounty* (i.e. earn a living by day), *and express your gratitude to Him."*

وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَنَزَعْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا فَقُلْنَا هَاتُوا۟ بُرْهَٰنَكُمْ فَعَلِمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱلْحَقَّ لِلَّهِ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

(74) The day when Allāh will call them saying, "Where are the partners that you ascribed to Me?" (75) We will extract a witness from every nation and say, "Produce your proof." They will then come to know that the truth belongs to Allāh and whatever they ascribed to Allāh will be lost to them.

A WITNESS AND PROOF WILL BE REQUIRED FROM EVERY NATION ON THE DAY OF QIYĀMAH

Allāh reiterates a previous verse when he says, *"The day when Allāh will call them saying, 'Where are the partners that you ascribed to Me?"* However, the occasion is different. When this question was posed previously, Allāh said, *"Those against whom the decree shall be passed, will say, 'O our Lord! These are the ones whom we have led astray.. We led them astray just as we were astray. We seek exoneration from You. They never worshipped us.'"*

However, in the verse under discussion, the people will not be able to respond to the question. For this reason, Allāh *"will extract a witness from every nation and say, 'Produce your proof'"* Allāh will present the Prophets عليهم السلام as witnesses to attest to the disobedience of these nations.

It will only be then that they will *"come to know that the truth belongs to Allāh..."* Whereas they contested everything the Prophets عليهم السلام told them in this world, they will realise the error of their ways on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Then also, *"whatever they ascribed to Allāh will be lost to them."* They will not receive the anticipated assistance from their gods.

۞ إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِن قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ فَبَغَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولِي الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ (76) وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَأَحْسِن كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (77) قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِندِي ۚ أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ مِن قَبْلِهِ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرُ جَمْعًا ۚ وَلَا يُسْأَلُ عَن ذُنُوبِهِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ (78) فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ ۖ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ (79) وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَلَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا الصَّابِرُونَ (80) فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِن فِئَةٍ يَنصُرُونَهُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُنتَصِرِينَ (81) وَأَصْبَحَ الَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا مَكَانَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ وَيْكَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ ۖ لَوْلَا أَن مَّنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ بِنَا ۖ وَيْكَأَنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ (82)

(76) Indeed Qārūn was from Mūsa's people, but rebelled against them. We granted him treasures, the keys of which were too heavy for a mighty troop of men. When his people told him, "Do not be boastful, for verily Allāh does not like the boastful." (77) "Seek the Home of the Hereafter using the means that Allāh has granted you and do not forget your portion from this world. Be benevolent just as Allāh has been benevolent unto you. And do not seek corruption on earth, for Allāh does not like those who create corruption." (78) He replied, "I have been granted all of this because of the knowledge I possess." Did he not know that Allāh has already destroyed many generations before him

who were more powerful than him and larger in number? The criminals will not be questioned about their sins. (79) So he emerged among his people in pomp and splendour. Those who desired the world gaped, "If only we also possessed what Qārūn has! Undoubtedly, he is extremely fortunate." (80) Those who were granted knowledge said, "Woe to you! Allāh's rewards are better for the one who believes and does good deeds. Only the patient ones shall receive this." (81) So We plunged Qārūn and his home within the ground. There were no troops to assist him against Allāh, nor could he assist himself. (82) Those who aspired to be like him the previous day, said the next morning, "O dear! Indeed Allāh enlarges sustenance for those bondsmen He wills and straitens. If it were not for Allāh's favour on us, we would also have been plunged (in the earth). Alas! The disbelievers will certainly not succeed."

QĀRŪN BOASTS ABOUT HIS WEALTH, PEOPLE ENVY HIM, BUT THE GROUND EVENTUALLY SWALLOWS HIM

The above verses cite the incident of Qārūn. Allāh says, *"Indeed Qārūn was from Mūsa's people, but rebelled against them."* Commentators have mentioned various opinions about Qārūn. Some say that he was the son of Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام paternal uncle, while others say that he was the uncle himself. Others are of the opinion that he was the son of Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام maternal aunt. However, all these opinions are based on Isrā'īli narrations and cannot be authenticated.

Allāh *"granted him treasures, the keys of which were too heavy for a mighty troop of men.* "Excessive wealth usually breeds arrogance in a person. Qārūn was no exception. Therefore, his people advised him saying, *"Do not be boastful, for verily Allāh does not like the boastful. Seek the Home of the Hereafter using the means that Allāh has granted you..."* They advised him to spend in Allāh's path so that the rewards may accrue to him in the Hereafter. It should not be that a person leaves all his wealth behind for his heirs without benefiting from it. In saying this, they cautioned him against squandering his wealth, thereby destroying his life in the Hereafter.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Man says, 'My wealth! My wealth!' whereas only three things are actually his. (1) The food that he ate and digested, (2) the clothing that he wore out, and (3) the wealth that he spent for Allāh's pleasure, thereby accumulating a treasure. All else he will leave for his heirs." [*Muslim v. 2 p. 407*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم, "Which of you likes the wealth of his heirs more than his own wealth?" They replied, "None of us can possibly like his heir's wealth more than his own." Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Understand that your wealth is only what you have sent ahead (i.e. spent for Allāh's pleasure to be rewarded in the Hereafter). The wealth left behind belongs to the heirs."

It is strange that people tend to become more miserly as they accrue more wealth. They will spend millions to purchase another factory in addition to their existing factory, but would not contribute even a few hundred for building a

Masjid. Such people think only about the world, to the extent that they even take stock of their businesses while performing Salāh.

Qārūn's people also advised him thus: *"...and do not forget your portion from this world"* i.e. do not fail to use that portion of your worldly wealth that would be of assistance to you in the Hereafter. Allāh says in Surah Muzzammil, *"Whatever good you sent ahead for yourselves, you will find it with Allāh."* [*Surah* 73, *verse* 20]

Certain commentators have interpreted the above advice to mean that he should also utilise the wealth for his personal needs. However, the first interpretation is best because a person boasting about his wealth does not need to be advised to spend on himself.

They also told him, *"Be benevolent just as Allāh has been benevolent unto you. And do not seek corruption on earth, for Allāh does not like those who create corruption."* In this they advised him not to squander his wealth in sinful and wasteful ways.

In response to the good counsel, Qārūn replied by saying, *"I have been granted all of this* (wealth) *because of the knowledge I possess."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه reports that Qārūn had mastered the art of alchemy, by which he could turn things into gold. Other commentators say that he was a good businessman. Therefore, he meant to tell the people that he deserves to earn the fruit of his labours. He believed that he could now use the wealth as he pleased.

Allāh replied to this statement by saying, *"Did he not know that Allāh has already destroyed many generations before him who were more powerful than him and larger in number?"* He therefore had nothing to boast about because Allāh had given more to others, whom he easily destroyed when He willed. None of these assets could save them from Allāh's punishment.

"The criminals will not be questioned about their sins." Since Allāh has knowledge of everything and the recording angels write every deed down, Allāh does not have to ask people whether they perpetrated certain sins or not. The evidence speaks for itself. Those verses that make mention of questioning refer to rhetorical questions, which need not be answered. They will be asked about their sins as a manner of reproach.

"So he emerged among his people in pomp and splendour." Even in present times, people tour the town in great splendour to display their wealth and invite people to meals merely to show off their possessions. People even show off the wedding gifts they give their daughters by transporting them individually to the groom's house. They are then displayed for all present to see, as a mark of their affluence.

Impressed by Qārūn's wealth, *"Those who desired the world gaped, 'If only we also possessed what Qārūn has! Undoubtedly, he is extremely fortunate."*

Hearing this response, *"Those who were granted knowledge (of the transitory nature of worldly commodities) said, 'Woe to you! Allāh's rewards are better for the one who believes and does good deeds. Only the patient ones shall receive this.'"* The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم has mentioned that the smallest Heaven will be ten times

larger than this entire world.

It was then that Allāh's punishment overtook Qārūn. Allāh says, *"So We plunged Qārūn and his home within the ground. There were no troops to assist him against Allāh, nor could he assist himself"*

"Those who aspired to be like him the previous day, said the next morning, 'O dear! (We were extremely foolish) Indeed Allāh enlarges sustenance for those bondsmen He wills and straitens." Wealth does not signify that Allāh loves a person, and neither should such persons be envied.

They also said, *"If it were not for Allāh's favour on us (by not fulfilling our aspiration to be like him), we would also have been plunged (in the earth with him). Alas! The disbelievers will surely not succeed."*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that a believer *(Mu'min)* must never envy any bounty enjoyed by a sinner because he can never know what awaits the person after death. Allāh has kept a punishment in store for him, which never ends i.e. Hell from which there is no escape. [*"Mishkāt" p. 447*]

The wealth of the disbelievers cannot be compared to the bounties that the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will receive in Heaven.

Note: How is the story of Qārūn linked to the preceding subject matter? Commentators have cited the following two reasons for this:

1. The story of Qārūn is linked to the story of Sayyidina Mūsa علیه السلام, with which the Surah began when Allāh says, *"With the truth, We recite to you from the narrative of Mūsa and Fir'aun for those people who believe."* [*verse 3*]

2. The story is linked to verse 60, where Allāh says, "Whatever you have been granted are the assets and adornments of this worldly life. That which is with Allāh is best and eternal. Do you not understand?" The story of Qārūn depicts the same lesson. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ۚ وَٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ مَن جَآءَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا ۖ وَمَن جَآءَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى ٱلَّذِينَ
عَمِلُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

(83) This is the Home of the Hereafter, which We shall appoint for those who do not desire pageantry on earth nor corruption. The best outcome shall be for the pious. (84) Whoever brings a good deed will receive better than that. Whoever brings a sin, the sinners will be punished only for what they did.

THE HEREAFTER IS FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT DESIRE PAGEANTRY AND CORRUPTION ON EARTH

Allāh declares, *"This is the Home of the Hereafter, which We shall appoint for*

those (righteous people) who do not desire pageantry on earth nor corruption. The best outcome shall be for the pious." It is incumbent on every person to submit before Allāh's grandeur and to perpetually adopt humility. The more a person recognises Allāh, the more humble should he be.

People who aspire to attain nobility in this world commit a great number of sins in realising their aim. They also tend to perpetrate a great deal of injustice against others. Some even resort to violence and murder if they feel the need to. Despite their misguided efforts, they are depriving themselves of Heaven and also fail to achieve the success and honour which is attained by those who obey Allāh' s commands. They merely thrive on the little power they possess, because of which people are terrified to speak against them.

THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY AND THE ABOMINATION OF PRIDE

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who humbles himself for Allāh, Allāh will elevate him. He will consider himself small in his own estimation, but will be high in people's esteem. Allāh will humiliate whoever is proud. He will consider himself great in his own estimation, but will be more degraded than a dog and a pig in the eyes of people." [*"Mishkāt" p. 434*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that the person who has pride equal to even a mustard seed shall never enter Heaven. [*"Mishkāt" p. 433*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that proud people will appear as small as ants on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. They will then be cast into a pit of Hell called 'Bawlis,' where they will be engulfed in flames and 'Tīnatul Khabāl' (the discharge emanating from the bodies of the people of Hell) will be given to them to drink. [*Tirmidhi*]

"Whoever brings a good deed {on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*} *will receive better than that."* The greatest deed is belief *(Imān)*, for which a person will attain the everlasting bliss of Heaven. Every deed will receive a minimum of tenfold reward. On the other hand, *"Whoever brings a sin; the sinners will be punished only for what they did."* The worst of sins is disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)*, which will condemn people to an eternity in Hell. Whether rich or poor, noble or debased, every disbeliever and polytheist will be doomed to Hell.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِى فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لَرَآدُّكَ إِلَىٰ مَعَادٍ ۚ قُل رَّبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ مَن جَآءَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ
وَمَنْ هُوَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ (85) وَمَا كُنتَ تَرْجُوٓا۟ أَن يُلْقَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ إِلَّا
رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ (86) وَلَا يَصُدُّنَّكَ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
بَعْدَ إِذْ أُنزِلَتْ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ (87) وَلَا تَدْعُ
مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ ۘ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ كُلُّ شَىْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُۥ ۚ لَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ
تُرْجَعُونَ (88)

(85) Verily, the One Who decreed the Qur'ān for you shall return you to your place of return. Say, "My Lord knows best who brings guidance and who is in manifest error." (86) You never anticipated that a scripture would be given to you, but it is only by the mercy of your Lord. So never be an accomplice to the disbelievers. (87) They should never prevent you from Allāh 's verses after they have been revealed to you. Keep calling towards your Lord and never be from the idolaters. (88) Do not call to another deity with Allāh. There is none worthy of worship besides Him. Everything shall perish besides His Countenance. All decisions rest with Him and to Him shall you all be returned.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS GIVEN THE QUR'ĀN BECAUSE OF ALLĀH'S MERCY

Commentators mention that the first of the above verses promises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he will be allowed to return to his native city of Makkah after migrating to Madinah. Consequently, in the 8th year after Hijrah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entered Makkah as a victor.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reached a place called Juhfa en route to Madinah, he longed to return to his hometown of Makkah. On that occasion, Jibr'īl عليه السلام arrived with the revelation of the above verse. Based on this narration, certain commentators have interpreted the word 'farada' (translated above as *"decreed")* to mean revealed' i.e. *"Verily, the One Who revealed the Qur'ān to you shall return you to your place of return* (*i.e. to Makkah*)."

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that Allāh will return the Holy prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to Heaven.

"Say, 'My Lord knows best who brings guidance and who is in manifest error." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" that this verse is a reply to the Polytheists who said that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in error.

"You never anticipated that a scripture would be given to you, but it is only by the mercy of your Lord (that you were conferred the mantle of Prophethood)." Therefore, just as Allāh bestowed his special mercy and grace upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by granting him the Qur'ān, Allāh's mercy will also return him to Makkah.

"So never be an accomplice to the disbelievers." The verse addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, telling him not to succumb to the bidding of the polytheists to follow the religion of their forefathers.

"They (the disbelievers) *should never prevent you from Allāh 's verses after they have been revealed to you."* This verse also addresses the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It warns that they should never allow the disbelievers to prevent them from learning, teaching and practising the Qur'ān.

"Keep calling towards your Lord {i.e. to oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*} *and never be from the idolaters."* Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه reports that this verse was revealed when the polytheists of the Quraysh requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to

honour their idols. The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes that although the verse addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it indirectly addresses the disbelievers, telling them that they must never entertain hopes that the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم will ever join their ranks. It is impossible.

"Do not call to another deity with Allāh. There is none worthy of worship besides Him." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that this verse prohibits the Muslims from returning to polytheism *(shirk)*, although the address is to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [*v. 20 p. 130*]

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"Everything shall perish besides His Countenance. All decisions rest with Him and to Him shall you all be returned."*

سورة العنكبوت

Makkan	Surah Al-Ankabut	Verses 69

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ أَحَسِبَ ٱلنَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوٓا۟ أَن يَقُولُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٣﴾ أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن يَسْبِقُونَا ۚ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٤﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Mīm. (2) Do people think that they will be left to say, "We believe!" without being tested? (3) We certainly tested those before them, and Allāh will definitely know of those who are true and He will definitely know the liars. (4) Do those who perpetrate sins think that they can escape Us? Evil indeed is the decision they take.

MAN WILL BE TESTED AFTER PROCLAIMING IMĀN (*FAITH*)

The Surah is called Ankabūt (spider) because the spider is mentioned in verse 41. Allāh says, *"Do people think that they will be left to say, 'We believe!' without being tested?"* The question does not require a reply. Imān (*faith*) is never restricted to the tongue, but must be embedded within the heart. When a person is a sincere believer *(Mu'min)*, he will be tested in various ways. He may be tested by means of demanding acts of worship, by requiring to fight his whims and passions, or by enduring hardships and adversities. These tests prove whether the person is a sincere believer *(Mu'min)*, or whether he is a hypocrite.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 20 p. 134*) reports from Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه and from Ibn Abi Hātim رحمة الله عليه that the above verse was revealed with regard to those people who accepted Islām in Makkah after the Hijrah (*migration*).

The other Sahābah رضى الله عنهم wrote to them from Madinah, telling them that their Islām will not be confirmed until they migrate as well. These Muslims then decided to migrate, but were apprehended en route by the polytheists, who brought them back to Makkah.

When this verse was revealed, the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم in Madinah wrote to

them a second time, informing them about this verse. They again made an attempt to migrate. This time they resolved to fight the polytheists if they were accosted. Consequently, they left for Madinah. The polytheists again tried to apprehend them, but they fought them off. Some of these Muslims were martyred, while the others managed to reach Madinah. It was with regard to this that Allāh revealed the following verse of Surah Nahl: *"Then your Lord shall be Most Forgiving and Most Merciful after all unto those who migrate after being tried and then strive in His way and exercise patience."* [*Surah 16, verse 110*]

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه that *"people"* in the verse *"Do people think..."* refer to the hypocrites.

"We certainly tested those before them, and Allāh will definitely know of those who are true (in their faith) and He will definitely know the liars (i.e. those whose faith is merely verbal)." The Mu'minīn of the previous Ummah's were also tested. The Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم can also expect the same.

Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Too numerous were the Holy Prophets with whom many devoted men fought. They never lost courage with all the hardships that afflicted them in the path of Allāh, nether did they weaken, nor become helpless. Allāh loves the patient ones."* [*Surah 3, verse 146*]

A believer *(Mu'min)* should always pray for safety and peace, but must be steadfast in the face of hardships, directing his attention to Allāh. He must keep in mind the rewards for patience, which will allow him to build courage.

True Muslims will bear adversities, while those who merely accepted Islām for convenience or for some worldly motive, will revert to their former religions *(D'īn's)* when hardships strike.

Allāh then speaks about those who present the hardships to the Muslims, when He says, *"Do those who perpetrate sins think that they can escape Us? Evil indeed is the decision they take."* They cannot escape Allāh's punishment because of the sins and injustices that they perpetrate.

مَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ لِقَآءَ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ لَءَاتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٥﴾ وَمَن جَـٰهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَـٰهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَغَنِىٌّ عَنِ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ لَنُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَحْسَنَ ٱلَّذِى كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

(5) Whoever aspires to meet Allāh (should know) that the term stipulated by Allāh will certainly arrive. And He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing. (6) Whoever strives only strives for himself. Allāh is Independent of the entire universe. (7) Those who believe and do good deeds, We shall definitely remit their sins from them and reward them better than what they did.

EACH PERSON STRIVES FOR HIMSELF AND ALLĀH IS INDEPENDENT OF THE UNIVERSE

Allāh says, *"Whoever aspires to meet Allāh* (should know) *that the term*

stipulated by Allāh (for rewarding) *will certainly arrive. And He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing."* Allāh is Aware of every person's supplications, aspirations and deeds. However, at times sincere believers *(Mu'minīn)* also suffer some adversity, which may be termed as 'mujāhadah.'

The Arabic word 'mujāhadah' literally refers to a struggle between two. When a person carries out any act for the betterment of his Hereafter, the deed opposes his base instinct. Therefore, he is in a constant struggle against his carnal self. However this struggle and striving will be well rewarded by Allāh. Allāh says, *"Whoever strives only strives for himself Allāh is Independent of the entire universe."* Although Allāh does not require man's efforts, He is munificent enough to reward man for it.

"Those who believe and do good deeds, We shall definitely remit their sins from them (on account of repentance, good deeds, or purely by Allāh's grace) and reward them better than what they did." The sins of disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)* can be remitted only by accepting Islām. The reward for any good deed will be far more than the deed itself.

وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا ۖ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا
تُطِعْهُمَآ ۚ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿8﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَنُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿9﴾

(8) We emphatically commanded man to treat his parents kindly. If they force you to ascribe partners to Me about which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. Your return shall be to Me, when I shall inform you of what you used to do. (9) We shall definitely include those who believe and do good deeds among the righteous.

KIND TREATMENT OF PARENTS

Allāh says, *"We emphatically commanded man to treat his parents kindly."* Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"Your Lord has commanded that you worship only Him and that you treat your parents kindly. If any one of the two, or both of them reaches old age by you, then do not even tell them 'Ūf" and do not rebuke them. Speak to them gently. Lower for them the wings of humility out of compassion and say, 'O my Lord! Show mercy to them as they have raised me* (mercifully) *when I was young."* *[Surah 17, verses 23, 24]*

Kindness to parents also includes spending on them and being kind and cordial towards them. Allāh also makes special reference to aged parents, to whom one cannot even say, "Ūf!" The verse of Surah Bani Isrā'īl also cites a prayer *(du'ā)* to be made for one's parents. Just as they cared for one as a frail and weak child, one should also care for them when they have grown frail and weak. Refer to the commentary of the above verses of Surah Bani Isrā'īl for more details on the subject.

Allāh continues to say, *"If they force you to ascribe partners to Me about which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them."* Mentioning the same situation, a verse of Surah Luqmān adds that in spite of not obeying them, one should nevertheless continue to associate harmoniously with them. One cannot contravene Allāh's orders on the request of anyone.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The creation cannot be obeyed if it means that the Creator be disobeyed." [*"Mishkāt"*]

Sayyidah Asmā رضى الله عنها, who was one of Sayyidina Abu Bakr's رضى الله عنه daughters migrated to Madinah without her mother, who was then still a non-believer. In the 6th year after Hijrah (*migration*), the Muslims entered into a pact with the polytheists, by which each party could freely associate with the other. During this period, her mother came to Madinah. Sayyidah Asmā رضى الله عنها asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether she was permitted to financially assist her mother, who was desperately in need of aid. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم urged her to treat her mother well. [*Bukhari*]

Parents today encourage their children to indulge in various sins like shaving the beard, accepting bribes, working for banks, taking interest, dressing immodestly, etc. It is Harām (*Unlawful*) for the parents to behave in this manner, and it is Harām (*Unlawful*) for the children to conform because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The creation cannot be obeyed if it means that the Creator is to be disobeyed."

Allāh is man's Creator and Master. Therefore, obedience to Him is of paramount importance and cannot be forfeited in order to obey His creation.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 20 p. 139*) reports that when Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqās رضى الله عنه accepted Islām, his mother said to him, "O Sa'd! I hear that you have forsaken your religion *(D'īn)* for another. I swear by Allāh that I shall never enter any house (i.e. I will remain standing in the heat) and all food is Harām (*unlawful*) for me until you stop following Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم."

Although Sayyidina Sa'd رضى الله عنه was the favourite of his mother, he refused to forsake Islām. His mother kept her oath and neither ate, nor took shelter for three days. When Sayyidina Sa'd رضى الله عنه related the incident to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the above verse was revealed.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*p. 461*) reports that after his mother spent two days and two nights in this condition, he told her that he would not forsake Islām even if she had a hundred lives to sacrifice for her oath. She now had the option to either break her oath or die. She lost hope in changing his mind and broke her oath.

Allāh says further, *"Your return shall be to Me, when I shall inform you of what you used to do."* Whatever a person does in this world will present itself in the Hereafter, where the person will either be rewarded or punished.

"We shall definitely include those who believe and do good deeds among the righteous." They will enter the ranks of these fortunate people in Heaven.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ فَإِذَآ أُوذِىَ فِى ٱللَّهِ جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ ٱلنَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ

وَلَئِن جَآءَ نَصْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا مَعَكُمْ أَوَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا فِى صُدُورِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

(10) Among people are those who say, "We believe in Allāh!" Then, when they suffer any adversity in Allāh's cause, they treat the difficulty people give like Allāh's punishment. If help comes from your Lord, they will certainly say, "We were always with you." Does Allāh not know best what is in the hearts of all in the universe? (11) Allāh will certainly know those who believe and will definitely know the hypocrites.

THOSE WHO CLAIM TO BELIEVE ARE PUT TO THE TEST

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that the verse refers to certain weak Muslims who claimed to accept Islām, but would sway to the tune of the polytheists when put under pressure. They hid this behaviour from the Muslims. Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to those Muslims whom the polytheists took back to Makkah after migrating to Madinah.

Love for this world prompts people to waver in their faith. The sincere Muslim endures all hardships without faltering in his Imān, like Sayyidina Khabbāb رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Bilāl رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Ammār رضى الله عنه and other Sahābah رضى الله عنهم. They understood that Allāh's punishment is worse than the difficulties of this world.

Allāh says that these weak Muslims seem to regard the injustice of the disbelievers as Allāh's punishment and revert to disbelief. Describing their double standards, Allāh says, *"If help comes from your Lord (warranting booty, they also want a share and), they will certainly say, 'We were always with you.' Does Allāh not know best what is in the hearts of all in the universe?"* Allāh is well aware of those who conceal hypocrisy in their hearts.

"Allāh will certainly know those who believe and will definitely know the hypocrites." Allāh is Aware of their condition at present and what it will be in the future.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ سَبِيلَنَا وَلْنَحْمِلْ خَطَٰيَٰكُمْ وَمَا هُم بِحَٰمِلِينَ مِنْ خَطَٰيَٰهُم مِّن شَىْءٍ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَلَيَحْمِلُنَّ أَثْقَالَهُمْ وَأَثْقَالًا مَّعَ أَثْقَالِهِمْ وَلَيُسْـَٔلُنَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عَمَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

(12) The disbelievers say to the believers, "Follow our way and we will bear the burden of your sins. They will not carry any part of their sins. They are certain liars. (13) They will certainly carry their own burdens in addition to those of others. And they will definitely be questioned about what they fabricated.

NONE SHALL BEAR THE BURDEN OF ANOTHER'S SINS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

In an attempt to mislead the Muslims, *"The disbelievers say to the believers, 'Follow our way and we will bear the burden of your sins.* The disbelievers realised that the Muslims feared retribution on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah),* because of which they would not forsake their religion *(D'īn).* It was for this reason that they even offered to bear the burden of this sin in the Hereafter. They made this offer only because they did not believe in the punishment of the Hereafter. Otherwise, a person cannot even bear the fire of this world for a few seconds, let alone burning until eternity in Hell, which is 69 times hotter.

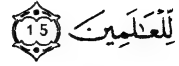
Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"No soul shall bear the burden of another."* Likewise, the above verse of Surah Ankabūt says, *"They will not carry any part of their sins. They are certain liars."* It is irrational that anyone should be made to suffer for the crimes of another. Even if another person willingly accepts to suffer for someone, it will still not absolve the sinner from hioner sins. Therefore, one will still have to be punished.

The statement made by the polytheists contains two lies. The first is that they will never be prepared to suffer for another on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah),* when even brothers and family members will flee from each other, unable to assist them. The second lie is the claim that the accused will be excused from the sin.

"They will certainly carry their own burdens in addition to those of others. And they will definitely be questioned about what they fabricated." Although the verse emphasises that no person can suffer the punishment because of another, it does not exonerate those who mislead others. They will have to suffer for the sin of misleading others. It is in reference to this that Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"So that they may carry their entire burdens on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah) together with the burdens of those whom they mislead without knowledge. Evil indeed is the burden that they bear."* [*Surah 16, verse 25*]

This explanation clarifies the essence of a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who calls to guidance will receive the reward of all those people who follow him without their rewards being decreased at all. The person who calls to deviation will receive the sin of all those people who follow him without their sins being decreased in the least." [*Muslim*]

Many people also adopt the practice of coercing others to perpetrate certain sins. When they refuse for fear of punishment, these ignorant people claim that they will bear the punishment on their behalf. This statement leads one to disbelief because it indicates that they refute punishment in the Hereafter and are prepared to accept the consequences. While the instigator will not suffer for the act of the sinner, one will suffer for the sin of misleading.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا فَأَخَذَهُمُ
ٱلطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَصْحَٰبَ ٱلسَّفِينَةِ وَجَعَلْنَٰهَآ ءَايَةً

(14) Without doubt, we sent Nūh to his nation, where he remained for a thousand years less fifty years. Then a storm struck them as they were oppressors. (15) We rescued Nūh and the people on the ark, making the incident a lesson for the universe.

SAYYIDINA NŪH'S عليه السلام PREACHING IS REJECTED AND HIS PEOPLE ARE DESTROYED

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام preached to his nation for 950 years, advising them to believe in Tauhīd and to forsake idolatry. However, they made various excuses and argued with him extensively. They even went to the extent of asking for the punishment he warned them about.

Eventually, Allāh commanded Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام to build an ark to accommodate the believers when the floods came. Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"They denied him, and We rescue him and those with him in the ark, while We drowned those who denied Our verses. Without doubt they were a blind nation."* [*Surah 7, verse 64*]

The incident of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام is mentioned in detail in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 59-64*], Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 24-48*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 105-122*] and Surah Nūh [*Surah 71, verses 1-28*].

وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ ۖ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ إِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْثَٰنًا وَتَخْلُقُونَ إِفْكًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقًا فَٱبْتَغُوا۟ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرِّزْقَ وَٱعْبُدُوهُ
وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۖ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِن تُكَذِّبُوا۟ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أُمَمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا عَلَى
ٱلرَّسُولِ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٨﴾

(16) And We sent Ibrahīm, when he said to his people, "Worship Allāh and fear him. That is best for you if only you knew." (17) "Instead of Allāh, you merely worship idols and fabricate lies. Those that you worship instead of Allāh do not have control of your sustenance, so seek your sustenance from Allāh, worship Him and show gratitude to Him. To Him shall you be returned." (18) "If you deny, then certainly many nations have denied before you. The responsibility of the messenger is merely clear propagation."

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM PREACHES ONENESS OF ALLĀH (*TAUHĪD*) TO HIS PEOPLE AND EXHORTS THEM TO WORSHIP ALLĀH AND TO EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALLĀH

The story of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام is recounted in many verses of the Qur'ān. Surah Āl Imrān mentions his debate with the tyrant, Nimrūd. Surah

An'ām, Surah Anbiya and Surah Shu'arā also make mention of his preaching to his nation. He told them, *"Worship Allāh and fear him. That is best for you if only you knew. Instead of Allāh, you merely worship idols and fabricate lies. Those that you worship instead of Allāh do not have control of your sustenance, so seek your sustenance from Allāh, worship Him and show gratitude to Him. To Him shall you be returned."* Accepting the concept of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* will guarantee salvation in the Hereafter.

He also warned them saying, *"If you deny, then certainly many nations have denied before you (because of which they were destroyed). The responsibility of the messenger is merely clear propagation."* He fulfilled his task by preaching to them. They were now at liberty to either destroy themselves by remaining as disbelievers, or to salvage their souls by believing in the message.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ (19) قُلْ
سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ۚ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (20) يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَرْحَمُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ تُقْلَبُونَ
(21) وَمَا أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ۖ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ
مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ (22) وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلِقَائِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَئِسُوا
مِن رَّحْمَتِي وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (23)

(19) Do they not see how Allāh initiates creation and then recreates? This is certainly easy for Allāh. (20) Say, "Travel in the lands and see how Allāh creates the first time and then recreates the second time. Indeed Allāh has power over all things." (21) Allāh punishes whoever He wills and has mercy on whoever He wills. To Him shall you be returned. (22) You can never escape on earth, nor in the sky. You have no protecting friend, nor any helper besides Allāh. (23) Those who deny Allāh 's verses and meeting with Him are indeed those who have lost hope in My mercy and a torturous punishment shall be theirs.

SUBSTANTIATION OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)* AND A REPROACH FOR THE DISBELIEVERS

Allāh addresses the Quraysh of Makkah in these verses because they refuted the reality of resurrection on the day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh asks whether these people have Seen that He continuously creates people, animals and other creation. Each day new beings are born, while others are dying. Even when trees and plants wilt and die, Allāh brings them back to life with the rains. Despite these phenomena being witnessed daily, people still fail to accept that Allāh can certainly recreate man on the day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

"Say, 'Travel in the lands and see how Allāh creates the first time and then

recreates the second time. Indeed Allāh has power over all things."'

Thereafter, Allāh says that He *"punishes whoever he wills and has mercy on whoever He wills. To Him shall you be returned."* Only He orchestrates matters in both the worlds. Therefore, He says, *"You can never escape on earth, nor in the sky. You have no protecting friend, nor any helper besides Allāh."* None can hide, nor seek refuge from Allāh irrespective of how hard he tries.

"Those who deny Allāh's verses and meeting with Him are indeed those who have lost hope in My mercy and a torturous punishment shall be theirs. - Then it will be too late for regrets."

فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ ٱقْتُلُوهُ أَوْ حَرِّقُوهُ فَأَنجَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ۚ
إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (24) وَقَالَ إِنَّمَا ٱتَّخَذْتُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْثَٰنًا مَّوَدَّةَ
بَيْنِكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ ثُمَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ
بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا وَمَأْوَىٰكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ (25) ۞ فَـَٔامَنَ
لَهُۥ لُوطٌ ۘ وَقَالَ إِنِّى مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّىٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ (26) وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ
إِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِى ذُرِّيَّتِهِ ٱلنُّبُوَّةَ وَٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ أَجْرَهُۥ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ
وَإِنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ (27)

(24) The only reply that his people could give was to say, "Kill him or burn him!" Then Allāh saved him from the fire. Undoubtedly, there are certainly signs in this for the believing people. (25) Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, "You have merely taken to worship idols because of your mutual love in this worldly life. Soon, on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), you will oppose each other and curse each other. Your abode shall be the Fire and you will have no helpers." (26) So Lūt believed him. Ibrahīm said, "I shall migrate to my Lord, He is certainly the Mighty, the Wise." (27) We gifted him with Is'hāq and Ya'qūb, kept Prophethood and scriptures in his progeny and granted him his reward in this world. He shall certainly be from the righteous ones in the Hereafter.

THE PEOPLE OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام DECIDE TO BURN HIM ALIVE

Allāh resumes the story of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام once again. After he preached to his people to forsake idol-worship, they said, *"Kill him or burn him!"* However, when they cast him into a large fire, Allāh commanded the fire to be cool and peaceful for him. In this way, *"Allāh saved him from the fire. Undoubtedly, there are certainly signs* (of Allāh's tremendous power) *in this for the believing people."*

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام TELLS THE PEOPLE THAT THEY WORSHIP IDOLS ONLY OUT OF MUTUAL LOVE, WHICH WILL BE LOST ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

"Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, 'You have merely taken to worship idols because of your mutual love in this worldly life." i.e. They did it only to emulate their forefathers. They felt that they would be ostracised if they failed to conform to the paganistic ways of their fellow men.

He cautioned them that this mutual love will also disāppear on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. He said, *"Soon, on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah), you will oppose each other and curse each other. Your abode shall be the Fire and you will have no helpers."* On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, all of them will be blaming one another for their predicament.

Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"Each time a nation will enter, they will curse their sister nation. Until, when they are all gathered in Hell, the latter will say regarding the former, 'Our Lord, these are the people who led us astray, so give them a greatly intensified punishment of the Fire.' (Allāh) shall reply, 'For each there shall be double punishment, but you know it not."* [*Surah 7, verse 38*]

A verse of Surah Sād quotes the followers as saying to their leaders: *"No! You are the ones for whom there is no welcome! You people have brought this on us. What a horrible station it is!"* In addition to this, *"They will cry out, 'Oh our Lord! Double the," punishment in the Fire for those who have brought this on us. The sinners of this world will suffer the same plight on the Day of Judgement, when they will blame each other.*

SAYYIDINA LŪT ACCEPTS THE MESSAGE OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام, AFTER WHICH THEY BOTH MIGRATE

"So Lūt believed him." Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام was the son of Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام brother Hārān. After making every attempt to reform his nation, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام eventually declared, *"I shall migrate to my Lord, He is certainly the Mighty, the Wise."*

Although some commentators have mentioned that Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام made the statement that he wishes to migrate, it was most probably Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام who said it. A verse in Surah Sāffāt confirms that it was mentioned by Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, because it quotes him as saying, *"I am going to my Lord, Who shall soon guide me."* [*Surah 37, verse 99*]

Taking his wife, Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام and Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام along-with him, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام migrated from his homeland (between Iraq and Persia) to Palestine.

THE TIDINGS OF A SON AND A GRANDSON

When he migrated, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was 75 years of age and his wife was also extremely old. He then prayed to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Grant me a son from among the pious."* Allāh accepted his prayer *(du'ā)* and sent some angels to convey the news of a son to him. The incident has been discussed in

Surah Hūd. The glad tidings concerned the birth of his own son Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام and a grandson, Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام. Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام was born from his other wife, Sayyidah Hājirah عليها السلام.

THE SUCCESSION OF THE PROPHETHOOD IN THE PROGENY OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

Allāh says, *"We gifted him with Is'hāq and Ya'qūb, kept Prophethood and scriptures in his progeny..."* Every Prophet after Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was from his progeny, including Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh granted Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام acceptance among all the religion. Even though many nations may reject the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they still speak highly of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. This was a result of the du'ā that he made for Allāh to make people after him speak well of him.

*"..... and granted him his reward in this world. He shall certainly be from the righteous ones in the Hereafter. "*His reward in this world was that his progeny was blessed with multitudes of Prophets عليهم السلام. He was also allowed to leave the land of oppressors and had the honour of building Allāh's house (the Ka'ba). His stages in the Hereafter will also be extremely elevated.

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنْ
أَحَدٍ مِّنَ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿28﴾ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُونَ ٱلسَّبِيلَ
وَتَأْتُونَ فِى نَادِيكُمُ ٱلْمُنكَرَ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ ٱئْتِنَا
بِعَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿29﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱنصُرْنِى عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ
ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿30﴾ وَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ بِٱلْبُشْرَىٰ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا مُهْلِكُوٓا۟ أَهْلِ
هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ۖ إِنَّ أَهْلَهَا كَانُوا۟ ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿31﴾ قَالَ إِنَّ فِيهَا لُوطًا ۚ قَالُوا۟ نَحْنُ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِيهَا ۖ لَنُنَجِّيَنَّهُۥ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَهُۥ كَانَتْ مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿32﴾ وَلَمَّآ أَن
جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَا لُوطًا سِىٓءَ بِهِمْ وَضَاقَ بِهِمْ ذَرْعًا وَقَالُوا۟ لَا تَخَفْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ ۖ إِنَّا
مُنَجُّوكَ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَكَ كَانَتْ مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿33﴾ إِنَّا مُنزِلُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَهْلِ
هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ رِجْزًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿34﴾ وَلَقَد تَّرَكْنَا مِنْهَآ
ءَايَةًۢ بَيِّنَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿35﴾

(28) And we sent Lūt, when he said to his people, "Indeed you people engage in an obscenity, which none in the universe has indulged in before you." (29) "Do

you approach men, waylay the highways and perpetrate evil in your gatherings?" The only reply that his people could give was to say, "Bring Allāh's punishment to us if you are from among the truthful." (30) Lūt عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! Assist me against the anarchists." (31) When Our messenger angels came to Ibrahīm with the glad tidings, they said, "We are to destroy the inhabitants of this town. Its inhabitants are certainly oppressors." (32) Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, "Lūt is among them." They replied, "We know best who is present in the town. We shall definitely rescue him and his family, except his wife. She will be among those left behind." (33) When Our messenger angels came to Lūt, he was grieved by their presence and his heart constricted. They said, "Do not fear, nor grieve. We will surely rescue you and your family, except your wife. She will be of those left behind." (34) "We will send down on the people of this town a punishment from the sky on account of their disobedience." (35) Indeed We left behind in those towns a sign which is clear to those who have understanding.

SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام PREACHES TO HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY ARE FINALLY PUNISHED BECAUSE OF THEIR DISOBEDIENCE

After migrating with Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Allāh made Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام a Prophet and sent him to preach to the people of a town called Sadūm (Sodom), which was the largest of several towns on the bank of the Jordan River. Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام preached to the inhabitants of these towns saying, *"Indeed you people engage in an obscenity* (homosexuality) *which none in the universe has indulged in before you. Do you approach men, waylay the highways and perpetrate evil in your gatherings?"* Thus saying, he bade them to forsake these evils. However, *"The only reply that his people could give was to say, 'Bring Allāh's punishment to us if you are from among the truthful."*

".....waylay the highways..." One of the interpretations of this phrase is understood by the translation i.e. they were highway robbers. However, the phrase may also be translated as: *"You sever the way (to human reproduction by perpetrating homosexuality)."* A third interpretation of the phrase is that they prevented people from passing by their towns by continually harassing them.

"...perpetrate evil in your gatherings." Sayyidah Umm Hāni رضى الله عنها, the daughter of Abu Tālib, once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the evil referred to in this verse. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that they used to throw stones at passers-by and laugh at them. According to another narration, the person whose stone struck the traveller would then "own" him and would proceed to satisfy his passions with the unfortunate fellow. Thereafter, he would pay him a few Dirhams. They even appointed judges to decide who would "own" the person.

Sayyidina Muhammad bin Qāsim رحمة الله عليه says that the *"evil"* referred to the competitions that they held in passing wind from the anus. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه mentions that they used to indulge in homosexual orgies. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 2 p. 466*]

Eventually Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام supplicated to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Assist me against the anarchists."* In response to his supplication, Allāh sent some

angels to punish the people. The angels first approached Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"When Our messenger angels came to Ibrahīm with the glad tidings..."* The tidings were that he will soon father a son, by the name of Is'hāq, who will then father a son called Ya'qūb. In addition to this, they also told him, *"We are to destroy the inhabitants of this town. Its inhabitants are certainly oppressors.' Ibrahīm* عليه السلام *said, 'Lūt is among them.' They replied, 'We know best who is present in the town. We shall definitely rescue him and his family, except his wife. She will be among those left behind* (she will also be punished with them)."

Thereafter, they proceeded to meet Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"When Our messenger angels came to Lūt, he was grieved by their presence and his heart constricted."* Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام was overcome with grief because he feared that his people will want to satisfy themselves with these angels, who came in the form of handsome youth.

Sensing his apprehension, the angels comforted him saying, *"Do not fear, nor grieve. (We have come to destroy these people. Of course,) We will surely rescue you and your family, except your wife. She will be of those left behind. We will send down on the people of this town a punishment from the sky on account of their disobedience."*

According to their instructions, Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام led the believers (*Mu'minīn*) out of the town one night. The next morning, Jibr'īl عليه السلام lifted all the towns in to the air, overturned them and threw them back down. Thereafter, stones were rained upon them. The incident has been discussed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah verses 80-84*] Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 77-83*], Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verses 58-77*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 160-175*] and Surah Naml [*Surah 27, verses 54-58*].

Allāh concludes the epic by saying, *"Indeed We left behind in those towns a sign which is clear to those who have understanding."* The ruins of these towns are present to this day. Allāh says in Surah Sāffāt, *"You pass by them in the mornings and at nights. Do you not understand?"* The Quraysh passed by these ruins often on their trade journeys to Shām (*Syria*).

The Dead Sea now covers the ruins of these towns. It is unfortunate that people regard their visit to this place as a leisure, instead of an eye-opener.

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا فَقَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱرْجُوا۟ ٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْءَاخِرَ وَلَا
تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ (36) فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ فِى
دَارِهِمْ جَٰثِمِينَ (37) وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَا۟ وَقَد تَّبَيَّنَ لَكُم مِّن
مَّسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۖ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا۟
مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ (38) وَقَٰرُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مُّوسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ
فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ سَٰبِقِينَ (39) فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنۢبِهِۦ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ
أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ

ٱلْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَغْرَقْنَا ۚ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ۝٤٠

(36) We sent to Madyan their brother Shu'ayb. He said. "O my people! Worship Allāh, anticipate the Last Day and do not spread corruption on earth." (37) They denied him, so an earthquake seized them and they lay kneeling down in their homes. (38) And We destroyed the Ād and the Thamūd, whose condition became apparent to you by their dwellings. Devil (Shaytan) beautified their deeds for them and prevented them from the straight path even though they were people of deep insight. (39) And We destroyed Qārūn, pharaoh (Fir'aun) and Hāmān. Without doubt, Mūsa came to them with clear signs, but they were arrogant on earth. They could still not escape. (40) We seized each of them on account of his sin. Against one of them We sent a violent wind. One of them was seized by a shout. One of them was swallowed by the ground and we drowned another. Allāh was never One to oppress them, but they used to oppress themselves.

THE DESTRUCTION OF MADYAN, PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)*, HĀMĀN AND QĀRŪN

These verses make mention of some of the previously destroyed nations. Allāh begins by saying, *"We sent to Madyan their brother Shu'ayb. He said, 'O my people! Worship Allāh, anticipate the Last Day and do not spread corruption on earth."* He reminded them that they will have to answer to Allāh on the Day of Judgement, when they will not be able to conceal anything. As mentioned in many previous Surahs like Surah Hūd and Surah Shu'arā), Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام enjoined his people to desist from their practice of cheating in weight and measure.

However, despite his efforts, *"They denied him, so an earthquake seized them and they lay kneeling down in their homes."* The earthquake followed a scream, which has already been mentioned in previous Surahs.

Allāh continues to say, *"And We destroyed the Ād and the Thamud, whose condition became apparent to you by their dwellings."* The ruins of their once powerful civilizations still lie in full view of people who wish to see them.

"Devil (Shaytān) beautified their deeds for them and prevented them from the straight path even though they were people of deep insight." Despite their deep insight and intelligence, Devil *(Shaytān)* still managed to beguile them by enticing them with the pleasures of this world.

"And We destroyed Qārūn, pharaoh (Fir'aun) and Hāmān. Without doubt, Mūsa came to them with clear signs, but they were arrogant on earth." They considered it below their dignity to believe in Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, as Allāh says in Surah Mu'minūn, *"They said, 'Should we believe in two humans like ourselves whereas their people are our slaves?"* [*Surah 23, verse 47*]

In Surah Zukhruf Allāh quotes pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* as saying, *"Am I not better than this person who is ignoble and can hardly express himself?"* Eventually pharaoh

(Fir'aun) was drowned with his entire army, because, despite their resources, *"They could still not escape (Allāh's punishment).*

Referring to all the destroyed nation, Allāh says, *"We seized each of them on account of his sin. Against one of them We sent a violent wind."* This occurred to the Ād, who suffered a tempest lasting seven nights and eight days [*Surah Hāqa (69), verses* 5-7].

"One of them was seized by a shout." This refers to the Thamūd, as mentioned in Surah Hūd. *"One of them* (Qārūn) *was swallowed by the ground"* (as mentioned in Surah Qasas). *"and we drowned another"* {referring to pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*}."

"Allāh was never One to oppress them (by punishing them without perpetrating a sin), but they used to oppress themselves." They were all destroyed on account of their sins, for refusing to accept the truth and for adhering to disbelief.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا
وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعَنكَبُوتِ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ (41) إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ
مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (42) وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ
نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ (43) خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (44)

(41) The similitude of those who adopt defenders besides Allāh is like the similitude of a spider who spun a web. Without doubt, the frailest of homes is the home of the spider, if only they would understand. (42) Verily Allāh has knowledge of whatever they call to besides Himself. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (43) These are the similitude's that We coin for people. Only those with knowledge will understand them. (44) Allāh has created the heavens and the earth with the truth. There is certainly a sign in them for the believers.

THE HOPES THAT THE POLYTHEISTS ENTERTAIN IN THEIR GODS IS LIKE THE WEB OF A SPIDER

Allāh cites the example of those people who pin their hopes in the gods that they worship, thinking that these gods will be of assistance to them. Allāh says, *"The similitude of those who adopt defenders besides Allāh is like the similitude of a spider who spun a web. Without doubt, the frailest of homes is the home of the spider, if only they would understand."* In comparison to the homes and lairs of all other animals, the spider's web is the weakest and most vulnerable. Just as fragile is the belief of those who worship others besides Allāh. Their hope in the assistance of these gods will be of no avail to them.

"Verily Allāh has knowledge of whatever they call to besides Himself He is the Mighty, the Wise. These are the similitude's that We coin for people. Only those with knowledge will understand them." Those who do not wish to understand will not be

able to.

"Allāh has created the heavens and the earth with the truth (i.e. with certain wisdom). *There is certainly a sign in them for the believers."* Only the believers can benefit from these signs because they are inclined to them. The disbelievers refuse to believe even though they may perceive the truth.

PART TWENTY-ONE

اتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ
ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

(45) Recite the Book which has been revealed to you and establish Salāh. Verily Salāh prevents obscenity and evil. Without doubt, the remembrance of Allāh is greatest. Allāh knows what you do.

THE COMMAND TO RECITE THE QUR'ĀN AND TO ESTABLISH SALĀH

The first of the two commands issued in the above verse is to *"Recite the Book which has been revealed to you..."* The Qur'ān should be recited during Salāh, when alone, in public, and at all other times.

The second of the two commands *is "and establish Salāh."* Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"Establish Salāh from the setting of the sun until darkness of the night..."* [*Surah 17, verse 78*]

Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verse 114*] states, *"And establish Salāh at the two ends of the day and during portions of the night."* Although all these commands are addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم they apply equally to his Ummah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

Allāh says in Surah Baqarah [*Surah 2, verse 43*], *"Establish Salāh and pay Zakāh."* Ulema (*Scholars*) state that the "establishment" of Salāh refers to performing Salāh, taking heed of all the Sunan and Mustahabbāt *(Preferable)*, and with proper concentration and humility. This will also entail performing the Fardh Salāh in congregation.

"SALĀH PREVENTS OBSCENITY AND EVIL"

After commanding the performance of Salāh, Allāh adds, *"Verily Salāh prevents obscenity and evil."* If Salāh is performed as it should be performed, it will surely prevent a person from committing sins. All aspects of Salāh like the recitation of Qur'ān, Ruku (*genuflexion*), Sajdah (*prostration*), concentration, etc, must be carried out to the finest degree possible. The more a person corrects these aspects, the more effective will his Salāh be in preventing him from sin. The less attention he pays to these aspects, the longer will his Salāh take to achieve

this aim.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that a person once complained to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about another man who performed Salāh during the night, yet stole during the day. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commented that the person's Salāh will soon stop him from the evil. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

Another factor to be remembered is that although Salāh prevents people from sin, the onus also rests on the person to refrain from sin. Just as a lecturer urges people to act, the onus rests with them to act or remain passive. Only those people who wish to refrain will be able to do so. Some Ulema (*Scholars*) say that, at the minimum, Salāh will prevent a person from sin during the course of his Salāh, e.g. a person cannot commit sins on the street when engaged in Salāh.

THE VIRTUE OF ALLĀH'S REMEMBRANCE

"Without doubt, the remembrance of Allāh is greatest." Allāh's remembrance is the lifeblood of the universe. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will not take place if there is even one person saying "Allāh! Allāh!" [*Muslim v. 1 p. 84*]

Salāh is full of Allāh's remembrance. Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"Establish Salāh for My remembrance."* From the beginning of the Salāh until the end, a person is constantly engaged in remembrance of Allāh. Even his tongue is involved in active during Salāh.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was engaged in remembrance of Allāh at all times [Muslim]. Although every virtuous deed may be included in the wide interpretation of Allāh's remembrance, verbal remembrance of Allāh is an act that is not confined to any time or place. It may be engaged in even in the state of impurity. [However, recitation of the Qur'ān is forbidden when a person is impure].

Recitation of the Qur'ān, of *"SubhānAllāh"*, *"Al Hamdu Lillāh"*, *"Allāhu Akbar"*, etc are all forms of remembrance of Allāh. Sending salutations upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم (Durūd or Salawāt) is also regarded as remembrance of Allāh.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that a person will receive the reward of a good deed for reciting even a single letter of the Qur'ān, each reward being multiplied ten fold. [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the recitation of *"Subhā Nallāh Wal Hamdu Lillāh Wa Lā illāha Illallāhu Wallāhu Akbar"* is more beloved to him than everything upon which the sun rises. [*"Mishkāt" p. 200*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the words *"Subhā Nallāhi Wabi Hamdihi Subhān Nallāhil Azīm"* is light on the tongue, heavy on the scales and beloved to Allāh. [*Bukhari*]

A hadith in Tirmidhi reports the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying that the person who recites *"Subhā Nallāhil Azīm Wabi Hamdihi"* has planted a tree for himself in Heaven.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی اللہ عنہ narrates from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that he met Sayyidina Ibrahīm علیہ السلام on the night in which he was taken to the heavens. Sayyidina Ibrahīm علیہ السلام told him to convey his greetings to the Ummah and to tell them that Heaven is a fertile land with good water, but bare. The plants of Heaven is the recitation of *"Subhā Nallāh Wal Hamdu Lillāh W Lā ilāha Illalāhu Walāhu Akbar"* [*Tirmidhi*]. Therefore, the person who enters the Hereafter without any deeds to his credit will receive a bare piece of ground.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once struck a branch of dry leaves, causing them to fall to the ground. Thereupon, he said, *"Subhā Nallāh', 'Alhamdu Lillāh,' 'Lā ilāha Illalāh'* and *'Allāhu Akbar'* all eradicate sins just as these leaves are shed." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضی اللہ عنہ narrates from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that the best of all remembrance is the recitation of *'Lā ilāha Illallāh,'* and the best of du'ās is *'Alhamdu Lillāh."'* [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once asked him if he should show him the treasures of Heaven. When Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضی اللہ عنہ requested to be informed, the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said that it is the recitation of *"Lā Hawla Wa Lā Quwwata Illā Billāh hil Aliyyil Azīm."* [*Bukhari p. 449*]

In view of all these virtues, a person should not waste a second without investing it in remembrance. Many people while away their lives after retirement in reading newspapers and talking about other people and events. They should rather invest their valuable time in remembrance so that they would not have to regret in the Hereafter.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی اللہ عنہ narrates from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that every gathering in which Allāh is not remembered will be a source of harm for people. If Allāh wills, He may punish them for it, or forgive them. [*Tirmidhi*]

A person once asked the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, "The acts of Islām are numerous. Advise me about something upon which I may be constant." The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, "Your tongue should be ever moist with Allāh's remembrance." [*"Mishkāt" p. 198*]

Another person asked the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم about the most virtuous deed. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied that the most virtuous deed is for one to leave this world while his/her tongue is moist with Allāh's remembrance. [*"Mishkāt" p. 198*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "Besides Allāh's remembrance, do not talk excessively because excessive talk causes the heart to harden. Without doubt, the person farthest from Allāh is the one with a hard heart." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ narrates from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that everything has a polish, and the polish of the heart is Allāh's remembrance. He also added that nothing is more effective then remembrance in saving one from Allāh's punishment. Thereupon the Sahabah رضی اللہ عنہ asked,

"Not even Jihād in Allāh's way?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Not even Jihād in Allāh's way. Even if a person fights until his sword breaks, it will not be more effective than remembrance in saving him from punishment." [*"Mishkāt" p. 199*]

"Allāh knows what you do." According to His wisdom, He will either punish or reward people.

وَلَا تُجَٰدِلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ ۖ وَقُولُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَٰهُنَا وَإِلَٰهُكُمْ وَٰحِدٌ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُسْلِمُونَ (46) وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ ۖ وَمِنْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَّا ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ (47) وَمَا كُنتَ تَتْلُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِن كِتَٰبٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُۥ بِيَمِينِكَ ۖ إِذًا لَّٱرْتَابَ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ (48) بَلْ هُوَ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ فِى صُدُورِ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَّا ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ (49) وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَٰتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْءَايَٰتُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ (50) أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَذِكْرَىٰ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (51)

(46) Debate with the People of the Book only with that which is best; except those of them who are unjust. And say, "We believe in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to you. Our Deity and your Deity is One and we surrender to Him." (47) Thus have We revealed the Book to you. So those to whom We have given the Book believe in it, and there are some of them as well who believe in it. Only the disbelievers reject Our verses. (48) Before this, you were unable to recite any book, neither could you write with your right hand. Otherwise, the people of falsehood would be cast into doubt. (49) But this Qur'ān is in itself a compilation of clear proofs in the hearts of those given knowledge. Only the oppressors reject Our verses. (50) They say, "Why are signs not revealed to him from his Lord?" Say, "Signs are all in Allāh 's control. I am but a clear warner." (51) Is it not sufficient for them that we have revealed a Book to you, which is recited to them? There is certainly mercy and a reminder in it for the believing folk.

THE MANNER OF DEBATING WITH THE AHLUL KITĀB (*PEOPLEOF THE BOOK*)

Allāh says, *"Debate with the People of the Book (the Jews and Christians) only with that which is best..."* The Jews and Christians also believe in Allāh and know that Allāh has sent many Prophets عليهم السلام for the guidance of mankind. A

Muslim therefore does not have to debate with them regarding these issues, but only with regard to the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, which they reject.

They must also be corrected about alterations they have made in their scriptures and the divinity they have attributed to Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and Sayyidina Uzayr عليه السلام.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم migrated to Madinah, he was confronted by the Jews and also the Christians of Najrān. Many discussions and debates ensued. The first 80 verses of Surah Āl Imrān were revealed with regard to the Christian delegation from Najrān. In this discussion, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was instructed to challenge them to Mubāhala (*mutual imprecation to prove truth of one's points*). The challenge is issued in verse 61, where Allāh says, *"Whoever disputes with you concerning this after the knowledge has come to you, then say to them, 'Come! We shall summon your sons and our sons, your wives and our wives, yourselves and ourselves. Then we shall collectively supplicate sincerely (to Allāh) to invoke His curse upon the liars.*

Allāh says in verse 125 of Surah Nahl (Surah 16), *"Call to the path of your Lord with wisdom and 'Mow 'idhatul Hasanah' and debate with them in manner that is best."* In this verse, the command is given to call people in general, whereas the above verse of Surah Ankabūt refers to the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*) especially. They should be addressed in soft tones and without anger. Preaching in this manner is more effective. Even those who are arrogant should be addressed cordially, with the best of manners.

Of course, the verse makes the exception, *"except those of them who are unjust."* People who are totally uncompromising and harsh should be addressed in a manner most suitable to curb their irrationality.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes from Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه that *"those of them who are unjust"* refers to those Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*):

- *Who say that Allāh has a son.*
- *Who commit polytheism (shirk).*
- *Who say that Allāh is a pauper (refer to Surah 3, verse 181).*
- *Who say that Allāh's hand is tied in miserliness (refer to Surah 5, verse 64).*

Since such statements are prone to infuriate a Muslim, he will be excused for not being cordial in these cases.

"And say, 'We believe in what was revealed to us (Qur'ān) and what was revealed to you (the original Torah and original Injīl). Our deity and your deity is One and we surrender to Him." Since there is no apparent reason for confrontation in the light of the above common grounds, the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*) have no reason to reject the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Jews used to read the Torah in Hebrew and translate it for the Arabs. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised the Muslims saying, *"Neither believe them, nor falsify them. Rather say,"*

And say, 'We believe in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to you. Our Deity and your Deity is One and we surrender to Him."

This was instructed because one can never be certain about the authenticity of their narrations. Therefore, the narrations quoted from the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*) (called Isrā'īliyāt) cannot be authenticated, even though they have been reported by the Sahabah رضی الله عنهم. Therefore, no laws of Halāl and Harām can be deduced from them.

"Thus have We revealed the Book to you." i.e. The Qur'ān was revealed just as the previous scriptures were revealed. "So those to whom We have given the Book {i.e. the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*)} believe in it (i.e. in the Qur'ān), and there are some of them (i.e. the Polytheists of Makkah) *as well who believe in it. Only the disbelievers reject Our verses."* Those who reject the Qur'ān are the people who choose to hide the truth and remain adamant on falsehood.

A CLEAR PROOF TO THE PROPHETHOOD OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was born in Makkah, where he spent his entire life. The people of Makkah knew very well that he was unlettered. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was unable to read and write. Even the Jews and Christians knew from their scriptures that the final Prophet to man will be such. However, when he called them to Islām, they rejected his message.

Instead of responding to his call, they said, *"A human teaches him."* They said this even though they acknowledged that they were unable to produce a single Surah to match any of those in the Qur'ān. It is therefore evident that a man could not have composed the like of the Qur'ān, which could not be challenged by even the greatest poets and the most eloquent speakers. If no man could match it, how could an unlettered person write it?

Besides, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even informed the Jews about incidents that were known exclusively by them and made them aware of the serious alterations that they made in the Torah. He taught true beliefs and a vibrant, acceptable Shari'ah. This could not have been the achievement of any ordinary person, thus proving that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was certainly Allāh's messenger.

In the light of the above it would be easy to understand the verse where Allāh says, *"Before this, you were unable to recite any book, neither could you write with your right hand. Otherwise, the people of falsehood would be cast into doubt. "* If the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was lettered, the disbelievers could have easily said that he had written the Qur'ān himself. However, it is now impossible for them to make this claim.

"But this Qur'ān is in itself a compilation of clear proofs in the hearts of those given knowledge. Only the oppressors reject Our verses." Despite the fact that the Qur'ān is miraculous in nature, there will always be those obstinate few who will stop at nothing to falsify the Qur'ān.

Note: Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"...those who follow the unlettered Nabi*

(Prophet)," while the above verse says, *"Before this, you were unable to recite any book, neither could you write with your right hand."* These two verses prove a miracle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم; the miracle is that he was an ocean of knowledge despite the fact that he was unlettered.

Some Ulema (*scholars*) are of the opinion that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم learnt to read and write towards the end of his life. In substantiation, they quote the episode of Hudaybiyyah where the scribe of the peace treaty, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, wrote, "This is what Muhammad, the messenger of Allāh, has decided." Thereupon, the polytheist representative, Sahl bin Amr, objected that he substitute "Muhammad, the messenger of Allāh" with "Muhammad, the son of Abdullāh." He said that if they (the polytheists) accepted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Allāh' s messenger, there would not have been any dispute.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه to write "Muhammad, the son of Abdullāh," but Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه could not bring himself to do it because of his excessive respect for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then took the parchment from him and himself wrote, "This is what Muhammad, the son of Abdullāh, has decided." [*Muslim v. 2 p. 105*]

Other Ulema (*Scholars*) have mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave the parchment over to another scribe to add these words, but the narrator of the hadith interpreted this as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself writing.

However, this interpretation is not necessary because the episode could also have been a miracle. It must also be borne on mind that for a person to be able to write a few words does not necessarily make him a lettered person.

Allāh continues to say, *"They say, 'Why are signs not revealed to him from his Lord?"'* Here they referred to the miracles that they demanded to see. Allāh replies by saying, *"Say, 'Signs* (miracles) *are all in Allāh's control. I am but a clear warner."* All the Prophets عليهم السلام were unable to produce miracles of their own accord.

"Is it not sufficient for them that we have revealed a Book to you, which is recited to them?" The Qur'ān is a miracle in itself, which does not need to be corroborated by another miracle. Describing the Qur'ān, Allāh then says, *"There is certainly mercy and a reminder in it for the believing folk."*

قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۖ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْبَاطِلِ وَكَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ (52) وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ ۚ وَلَوْلَا أَجَلٌ مُسَمًّى لَجَاءَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَيَأْتِيَنَّهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ (53) يَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ (54) يَوْمَ يَغْشَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَيَقُولُ ذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (55)

(52) Say, "Allāh suffices as a Witness between myself and yourselves. He knows what is in the heavens and the earth. Those who believe in falsehood and disbelieve in Allāh are the true losers." (53) They seek to rush you with punishment. If it were not for a prescribed term, the punishment would have certainly come to them. It will definitely come to them suddenly when they do not perceive. (54) They seek to rush you with the punishment whereas Hell will certainly envelope the disbelievers... (55) ....on the day when the punishment will envelope them from above and from beneath their feet. It will then be said to them, "Taste what you used to do."

THE PUNISHMENT FOR DISBELIEF

When the disbelievers refused to believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم despite witnessing the miracle of the Qur'ān, Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to announce to them, *"Allāh suffices as a Witness between myself and yourselves. He knows what is in the heavens and the earth."* Allāh is Aware of the message that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم preached to the people, as well as the replies they gave him. Allāh will correspondingly punish them.

"Those who believe in falsehood and disbelieve in Allāh are the true losers." In another verse Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"Verily the losers are those who put themselves and their families at a loss on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). Behold! That is the evident loss."* This is so because their deeds will admit them all into Hell.

The disbelievers never believed in the warnings of punishment and used to foolishly request the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to bring it upon them. Punishment was never in the power of any Prophet of Allāh; therefore, when no punishment came to them immediately, they doubted the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم prophethood.

It was in reply to this that Allāh says, *"They seek to rush you with punishment. If it were not for a prescribed term, the punishment would have certainly come to them. It will definitely come to them suddenly when they do not perceive."* Even if no punishment afflicts the disbeliever in this world, his punishment begins with his death. He will begin to suffer in the grave, after which he will be further tormented on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Eventually, they will suffer the worst punishment in Hell. Describing the same Allāh says, *"They seek to rush you with the punishment whereas Hell will certainly envelope the disbelievers on the day when the punishment will envelope them from above and from beneath their feet. It will then be said to them, 'Taste* (the consequences of the deeds)*' what you used to do.*

يَٰعِبَادِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ أَرْضِى وَٰسِعَةٌ فَإِيَّٰىَ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿56﴾ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ
ٱلْمَوْتِ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿57﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُم مِّنَ
ٱلْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا نِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿58﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
صَبَرُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿59﴾ وَكَأَيِّن مِّن دَآبَّةٍ لَّا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا ٱللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا

(56) O My believing bondsmen! Indeed my earth is vast, so worship Me only. (57) Every soul shall taste death, after which you will all be returned to Us. (58) As for those who believe and do good deeds, We will certainly settle them in balconies of paradise (Jannah), beneath which rivers flow. There they shall abide forever. What a grand reward for those who act... (59) "..... those who exercise patience and who trust only in their Lord. (60) How many are the animals who do not carry their own provision? Allāh sustains them and you (people) as well. He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing.

THE IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY OF IMMIGRATION

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 472*) reports that there were many Muslims living in Makkah who could not express their Islām fearing persecution from the polytheists. Encouraging them to immigrate, Allāh revealed the verse saying, *"O My believing bondsmen! Indeed my earth is vast, so worship Me only."*

By then many Sahābah رضى الله عنهم had already immigrated to Madinah and Abysinnia because they could not live as free Muslims in Makkah. Allāh had promised the Muslims assistance if they immigrated. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"He who migrates in Allāh's way shall find in the land an abundance of pastures and vastness. Whoever will leave his home migrating towards Allāh and His messenger, and is then overtaken by death, most assuredly his reward is assured by Allāh. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* [*Surah 4, verse 100*]

Many people do not immigrate because of the difficulty entailed in relocating. They fear one of two things, either facing death at the hands of an enemy, or starvation and poverty. Although unable to practise Islām in the places where they reside, Muslims may be reluctant to migrate because they do not have these fears where they are.

"EVERY SOUL SHALL TASTE DEATH"

In reply to both of the above fears, Allāh declares, *"Every soul shall taste death, after which you will all be returned to Us."* Every person has to die, whether it be in his hometown or in the place to which he migrates. However, the immense rewards of migration will be realised after he has left this world and stands before Allāh. On the contrary, he will have to suffer untold punishment if he fails to migrate.

"As for those who believe and do good deeds, We will certainly settle them in balconies of Heaven, beneath which rivers flow. There they shall abide forever. What a grand reward for those who act, (i.e.) those who exercise patience and trust only in their Lord." Therefore, people should not sacrifice the tremendous rewards of the Hereafter merely for one's home and wealth in this perishable world.

THE PRESCRIBED SUSTENANCE WILL BE RECEIVED BY ALL

"How many are the animals who do not carry their own provision? Allāh sustains them and you (people) as well." There are two interpretations of this verse. The first

is that Allāh grants each animal its sustenance wherever it may be without it having to take its provisions along with it. The second interpretation is that the animals do not store food for future use, but eat as and when the need arises. Animals never exert themselves to find means of earning a living, but are sustained by Allāh. Therefore, when migrating, a Muslim should not be concerned about his sustenance. Allāh will take care of it.

Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"If you rely on Allāh as He deserves to be relied on, He will sustain you like he sustains the birds. They emerge hungry in the morning and return with a full belly in the evening."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 452*]

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that a person's sustenance follows him just as his death follows him. [*"Mishkāt" p. 454*]

"He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing." Allāh knows well who immigrates sincerely and with reliance in Him. He is aware of those who truly cannot migrate and those who simply make excuses.

When the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم migrated to Madinah, it was incumbent on all Muslims to do so as well. If anyone did not do so, his Imān was doubted. Of course, there were those who were truly unable to do so. However, the compulsion was lifted when the Muslims conquered Makkah.

There will always be a time when Muslims may be forced to migrate from their countries in order to preserve their belief *(Imān)* and Islām. If they fail to migrate in such conditions where they are unable to practice Islām, they will be guilty of a grave sin. The details of this are to be found in the commentary of verse 100 of Surah Nisā (*Surah 4*).

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ٱللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾ وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّن نَّزَّلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَوْتِهَا لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

(61) If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth and subjugated the sun and the moon, they will definitely reply, "Allāh!" So whence are they wandering astray? (62) Allāh increases sustenance for whoever He wills of His bondsmen and straitens. Verily Allāh has knowledge of all things. (63) If you ask them who sends rain from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death, they will certainly reply, "Allāh!" Say, "All praise belongs to Allāh ' but most of them have no understanding.

THE PROOF OF ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)*

With regard to the disbelievers, Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, *"If*

you ask them who created the heavens and the earth and subjugated the sun and the moon (appointing set functions for them), they will definitely reply, 'Allāh!' So whence are they wandering astray?" Since they admit that Allāh created these phenomena, why do they still refuse to submit to Him? What are they heading towards?

Just as Allāh has no partner in the creation of the universe, none is a partner to Him in the distribution of sustenance either. Allāh says, *"Allāh increases sustenance for whoever He wills of His bondsmen and straitens. Verily Allāh has knowledge of all things."* Therefore, none can question Him about His choice in granting abundance to some people, while not giving anything to others. He knows best why He does as He does.

"If you ask them who sends rain from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death, they will certainly reply, 'Allāh!' Say, 'All praise belongs to Allāh,' but most of them have no understanding." The disbelievers even admit that Allāh controls the way things happen, yet they do not utilise their intelligence to submit to Him.

وَمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ لَهِىَ ٱلْحَيَوَانُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ (64)

(64) The life of this world is mere futility and play. Without doubt, the life of the Hereafter is true life. If only they knew.

THE LIFE OF THIS WORLD IS MERE FUTILITY AND PLAY, WHEREAS REAL LIFE IS THAT OF THE HEREAFTER

The above verse makes it clear that, irrespective of the duration of a person's life in this world, it cannot be compared to the eternity of the Hereafter. The pleasures of this world will be of no use to man's existence in the Hereafter.

When children play games, imagining that they own restaurants and shops, they still approach their mothers when they get hungry. If the mother has to say that the children have their own restaurants to eat from, the children laugh and say that these are only imaginary and of no use. Similar is the case of this world. People revel in the pleasures and wealth they accumulate. Although the profits of the world may be useful to them while in the world, these will be useless to them in the Hereafter. The only help they will receive then will be from belief *(Imān)* and good deeds.

When the profits of this world cannot help them to attain their two real needs (safety from Hell and entry into Heaven), then these may well be classified as futility and play. These will be transformed only into sources of remorse and lamentation in the Hereafter.

After declaring that the world is mere futility and play, Allāh says, *"Without doubt, the life of the Hereafter is true life."* Those who will be admitted into Heaven will live a life of true joy and happiness, where Allāh will be eternally pleased with them. Allāh does not even make mention of the plight of the disbelievers, whose misery in the Hereafter will be far beyond the combined adversities of this

world. With regard to these people, Allāh says in Surah A'la, *"They will neither live nor die there."* This is true because the life of misery in Hell cannot be termed "life".

"If only they knew." If people only realised that their objective should be the Hereafter, they would pay little heed to this world.

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا۟ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ
يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿65﴾ لِيَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْنَـٰهُمْ وَلِيَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿66﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا
جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا وَيُتَخَطَّفُ ٱلنَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ أَفَبِٱلْبَـٰطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ
يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿67﴾ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُۥٓ أَلَيْسَ
فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿68﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ جَـٰهَدُوا۟ فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿69﴾

(65) When they board a ship, they supplicate to Allāh with sincere belief in Him. But when He rescues them to land, they again begin to ascribe partners to Him... (66) ".... to show ingratitude for the things We gave them and to enjoy. Soon they will come to know. (67) Do they not see that We have made the Haram peaceful, whereas people are being ravaged around them? Do they believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for Allāh's bounties? (68) Who can be more unjust than he who invents lies against Allāh or falsifies the truth when it comes to him? Is there not an abode for the disbelievers in Hell? (69) We shall definitely show Our avenues to those who endure suffering in Our cause. Verily Allāh is certainly with those who do good.

THE INGRATITUDE OF THE POLYTHEISTS

It is common among the polytheists to ignore all their gods when faced with any adversity, and turn to Allāh devotedly. Allāh cites the example of adversities faced at sea, when people fear being shipwrecked. Allāh says, *"When they board a ship, they supplicate to Allāh with sincere belief in Him."*

Verse 22 of Surah Yunus (Surah 10) says that when they are overcome with this fear, they cry to Allāh saying, *"If You rescue us from this, we will certainly be from among the grateful ones."* However, when Allāh *"rescues them to land, they again begin to ascribe partners to Him to show ingratitude for the things We gave them and to enjoy."* When they find themselves in peaceful times, they forget all the promises they made and succumb to the same practices of polytheism *(shirk)*. Allāh warns, *"Soon they will come to know."* They will realise the error of their ways only when they are overtaken by Allāh's punishment. Then it will be too late.

THE SPECIAL FAVOUR TO THE PEOPLE OF MAKKAH

"Do they (the people of Makkah) *not see that We have made the Haram peaceful,*

whereas people (the other Arabs) *are being ravaged around them?"* Although the Arabs were constantly fighting, they all revered the sanctity of the Haram of Makkah and never touched its inhabitants.

In gratitude for this favour of Allāh, the Makkans were supposed to be the first to believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They also ought to have been grateful 'to Allāh for raising a Prophet from among them. However, they did not do this, because of which Allāh says, *"Do they believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for Allāh's bounties?"* It is strange that all polytheists enjoy Allāh's bounties, yet worship others.

Of the worst lies that people could attribute to Allāh is to say that He has partners. Referring to them, Allāh says, *"Who can be more unjust than he who invents lies against Allāh or falsifies the truth when it comes to him? Is there not an abode for the disbelievers in Hell?"* They will definitely be doomed to eternal damnation in Hell.

"We shall definitely show Our avenues to those who endure suffering in Our cause." This verse refers to all those who exert themselves for the sake of Islām, be it fighting in Jihād, opposing the disbelievers verbally or by the pen, seeking the knowledge of religion, etc. Allāh promises to open up avenues for such people, on condition that the effort is undertaken only to please Allāh.

When such an effort is undertaken, Allāh will open up the avenues of further guidance for these people. Allāh says in Surah Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"As for those who are rightly guided, Allāh shall increase their guidance and grant them their Taqwa (piety)."* [*Surah 47, verse 17*]

Another interpretation of the verse is that Allāh will increase their knowledge, because He increases the knowledge of those who practise their knowledge. Allāh will open the hearts of those who exert themselves in propagating the religion, He will reveal the secrets of the Qur'ān to those who exert themselves in studying and compiling commentaries of the Qur'ān. Allāh will disclose the evils of society to those who make an attempt to rid society of these, so that he may address these issues. Allāh will also inspire them to speak the words that will influence others to reform themselves. When a believer (*Mu'min*) is sincere in his/her efforts, Allāh's assistance is sure to be in attendance.

In a hadith Qudsi, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reports that Allāh' says, "The person who draws a hand span closer to Me, I will draw an arm's length closer to him. Whoever comes an arm's length closer to Me, I will draw four arm's lengths closer to him."

"Verily Allāh is certainly with those who do good." The 'muhsinīn' (translated above as "those who do good") are those people who:

- *Believe in One Allāh without any partners.*
- *Believe in the finality of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم.
- *Accept Islām.*
- *Worship Allāh with sincerity.*

- *Perform all the acts of Islām properly and with sincerity i.e. without ostentation.*
- *Carry out the acts of religion as they are commanded.*

Allāh is always with such people and safeguards them from evils and calamities. In other verses of the Qur'ān, Allāh says that He loves such people and that they be given the glad tidings of Heaven.

At the beginning of Surah Ankabūt Allāh says, *"Do people think that they will be left to say, 'We believe!' without being tested?"* Whereas this verse informed the believers *(Mu'minīn)* that they will certainly face difficulties, the concluding verse of the Surah promises Allāh's assistance to and camaraderie with them.

سورة الروم

Makkan	Surah Ar-Rum	Verses 60

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ غُلِبَتِ ٱلرُّومُ ﴿٢﴾ فِيٓ أَدْنَى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ
﴿٣﴾ فِي بِضْعِ سِنِينَۗ لِلَّهِ ٱلْأَمْرُ مِن قَبْلُ وَمِنۢ بَعْدُۚ وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾ بِنَصْرِ ٱللَّهِۚ يَنصُرُ مَن يَشَآءُۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥﴾
وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِۖ لَا يُخْلِفُ ٱللَّهُ وَعْدَهُۥ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾ يَعْلَمُونَ ظَٰهِرًا
مِّنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْأٓخِرَةِ هُمْ غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

In the name of Allāh, The Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Mīm. (2) Rome will be defeated... (3) ... in the nearer land and, after their defeat, will again be victorious... (4) ... within a few years. All affairs are in Allāh 's control from before and afterwards. And on that day the believers will rejoice... (5) ...about Allāh's assistance. Allāh assists whoever He wills, and He is the Mighty, the Most Merciful. (6) Allāh has made a promise. Allāh never breaks His promise, but most people have no knowledge. (7) They have superficial knowledge of the life of this world and are negligent of the Hereafter.

THE PROPHESY OF A ROMAN VICTORY OVER THE PERSIANS AND THE BET BETWEEN SAYYIDINA ABU BAKR رضى الله عنه AND UBAYY BIN KHALAF

Commentators write that the Romans and the Persians once entered into combat. The Persians, ruled then by the Khosrau II, were polytheists, while the Romans belonged to the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the Book*) because they were Christians. Therefore, the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم desired that the Romans win the war, while the polytheists desired that the Persians win because they were polytheists like themselves.

The two superpowers clashed in Shām (close to Arabia) at Azra'āt and Busra. The result of the battle was that the Persians defeated the Romans. When the news reached Makkah, the Muslims were extremely grieved. The polytheists

began taunting them saying that their fellow polytheists had conquered the People of the Book (Christians), who were brothers to the Muslims, who were also People of the Book (Qur'ān). They drew the conclusion that they would also defeat the Muslims if they ever engaged in battle.

It was then that Allāh revealed the above verses, informing the Muslims that the Romans would soon regain their strength and conquer the Persian army. In the verse, Allāh says that the Romans *"after their defeat, will again be victorious within a few years."* In the above verses, Allāh says that this would occur in a *'few years"* without specifying the period. The Arabic word 'bidh' is used, which refers to any number between three and nine.

After these verses were revealed, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه addressed the Polytheists saying, "You people are rejoicing because those of your creed have been victorious. Do not be so glad, for, by Allāh, we will soon defeat the Persians, as our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has informed us." Hearing this, the polytheist, Ubayy bin Khalaf, told Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه that he is lying.

Thereafter, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه took a wager with the polytheist, telling him that if the Persians are victorious within three years, he would give Ubayy ten camels. However, if the Romans defeated the Persians in this time, Ubayy will have to pay the ten camels to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه. When the bet was accepted,

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about it.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه to increase the time period as well as the number of camels because it was certain that the Romans will defeat the Persians in three years. The period could well be longer because the word 'bidh' entailed any amount from three to nine.

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه met with Ubayy, who, upon seeing Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه, told him that it seems as if he regretted the wager. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه assured him that he was not remorseful, but proposed to increase the period and number of camels. They then mutually agreed that the period be nine years and the number of camels be a hundred. Other commentators say that the period was fixed at seven years.

Ubayy later feared that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه would leave Makkah when the time came to pay, so he asked Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه to appoint a guarantor from whom the camels could be collected in his absence. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه appointed his son, Abdullāh ["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"]. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that he appointed his other son, Abdur Rahmān رضی الله عنه, as a guarantor.

It later transpired that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه migrated to Madinah, after which, the battle of Uhud was about to take place. As Ubayy was leaving Makkah for the battle, Sayyidina Abu Bakr's رضی الله عنه son asked him to appoint a guarantor in his absence. He complied and was later killed in the battle.

A year after the treaty of Hudaybiyyah, the Romans defeated the Persians in a decisive battle. This happened to be after the sixth year of the wager, just as the

seventh year began (approximately A.D. 627). When Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه received the hundred camels from Ubayy' s heirs, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed him to give them all in charity. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 4751*]

Allama Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports certain other narrations with regard to this incident. "Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes from Tirmidhi that the Romans defeated the Persians at the time when the battle of Badr was fought (2nd year after Hijrah). Therefore, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه collected the camels from Ubayy himself because Ubayy was killed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم during the battle of Uhud (in the 3rd year after Hijrah).

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه to give the camels in charity because the wager was a form of gambling, which is Harām (*forbidden*) in Islām. It was not yet declared Harām (*forbidden*) at the time when the wager was made.

"All affairs (including the victory and defeat of armies) are in Allāh's control from before and afterwards. And on that day the believers will rejoice about Allāh's assistance." The Muslim rejoiced because the truth of Allāh's word would be apparent to the disbelievers and because the Muslims were victorious at the battle of Badr, which was also fought at that time. Allāh's assistance was apparent during all these occasions.

"Allāh assists whoever He wills, and He is the Mighty, the Most Merciful." This verse also alludes to the assistance Allāh rendered to the Muslims after Badr.

"Allāh has made a promise. Allāh never breaks His promise, but most people have no knowledge." Most people do not have conviction in Allāh's power and His ability to fulfil His promises. They merely view matters superficially without insight into His immense power.

THOSE WHO HAVE NOT RECOGNISED ALLĀH ARE IGNORANT DESPITE THEIR WORLDLY KNOWLEDGE

"They have superficial knowledge of the life of this world, and are negligent of the Hereafter." The verse prior to this states that these people *"have no knowledge"* even though they possess *"superficial knowledge of the life of this world."* This means that they are ignorant despite possessing some knowledge. Therefore, true knowledge is only that knowledge which teaches one about Allāh and leads to His recognition. Worldly knowledge that takes a person away from Allāh is really no knowledge at all.

People who are knowledgeable in the field of technology and are materially progressive will be considered to be ignorant if they have not recognised Allāh. This is because they are unaware of the most important objectives in this world, viz, entering Heaven and being saved from Hell.

Allāh describes intelligent people in Surah Āl Imrān, where He says, *"Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and day are signs for those who have intelligence; those who remember Allāh standing, sitting and reclining, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and earth. (Saying) Our Lord You have not created all this in vain! We glorify Your purity so save us from the punishment of the fire."* [*Surah 3, verses 190 and 191*]

Therefore, those who do not ponder over Allāh's greatness will be regarded as ignorant even though they have a string of degrees and inventions behind their name. Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"Can those with knowledge be equal to those who do not have knowledge?"* There can be no comparison. Knowledge that does not teach one about oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and belief in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cannot be termed knowledge at all.

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم ۗ مَّا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِلِقَآئِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿8﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوٓا۟ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَعَمَرُوهَآ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا وَجَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿9﴾ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓأَىٰٓ أَن كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَانُوا۟ بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿10﴾

(8) Have they not pondered about themselves? Allāh has created the heavens and the earth with the truth and for an appointed term. Verily many people reject their meeting with their Lord. (9) Have they not travelled in the lands and seen what was the plight of those before them? Those people were mightier than them, ploughed the earth and developed the earth more than they have developed it. Their messengers also came to them. Allāh could not have oppressed them, but they used to oppress themselves. (10) Then the outcome of those who perpetrated evil was evil indeed because they falsified Allāh's signs and mocked them.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO PONDER OVER THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

Although the Arabs were the first addressees of the Qur'ān, it addresses all of mankind, urging them to ponder awhile. Allāh says, *"Have they not pondered about themselves? Allāh has created the heavens and the earth with the truth* (i.e. to fulfil certain objectives) *and for an appointed term."* All of Allāh's creation serve the purpose of drawing man's attention to Allāh's existence and immense power.

The universe will exist until the dawn of Qiyāmah *(doomsday)*, when everything will be destroyed. Then Allāh will resurrect man and Jinn in His presence to answer for all their deeds. However, *"Verily many people reject their meeting with their Lord."* There are many who are of the opinion that Qiyāmah (*doomsday*) is imaginary, while others believe in reincarnation. Allāh makes them all aware of the fact that they will be summoned to His presence on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

THE ADVICE TO TRAVEL IN THE LANDS AND TO LEARN LESSONS FROM THE RUINS OF PREVIOUS CIVILIZATIONS

"Have they not travelled in the lands and seen what was the plight of those before them? Those people were mightier than them, ploughed the earth and developed the earth more than they have developed it." The earlier civilisations built magnificent monumental masterpieces, entailing unparalleled architecture and design. They even engineered canals and other methods of irrigation. However, they had to forsake all of this when they left the world.

Allāh says, *"Their messengers also came to them. Allāh could not have oppressed them, but they used to oppress themselves."* When they denied the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام, they were destroyed by Allāh's punishment, causing all their buildings to be left in ruins. This was because they oppressed themselves by failing to heed the warnings of the Prophets عليهم السلام.

"Then the outcome of those who perpetrated evil was evil indeed because they falsified Allāh's signs and mocked them." They faced punishment in this world and will be facing a far worse punishment in the Hereafter.

الله يبدؤا الخلق ثم يعيده ثم إليه ترجعون (11) ويوم تقوم الساعة يبلس
المجرمون (12) ولم يكن لهم من شركائهم شفعؤا وكانوا بشركائهم
كافرين (13) ويوم تقوم الساعة يومئذ يتفرقون (14) فأما الذين ءامنوا
وعملوا الصالحات فهم في روضة يحبرون (15) وأما الذين كفروا وكذبوا
بآياتنا ولقاي الآخرة فأولئك في العذاب محضرون (16) فسبحان الله حين
تمسون وحين تصبحون (17) وله الحمد في السماوات والأرض وعشيا وحين
تظهرون (18) يخرج الحي من الميت ويخرج الميت من الحي ويحي الأرض بعد موتها
وكذلك تخرجون (19)

(11) Allāh initiated creation and will recreate it, after which you will all be returned to Him. (12) The day when judgment day (Qiyāmah) will dawn, the criminals will lose all hope. (13) None of their partners will be intercessors for them and they will reject their partners. (14) The day when judgment day (Qiyāmah) will dawn, that day will they be in different conditions. (15) As for those who believe and do good deeds, they will be rejoicing in a garden. (16) As for those who disbelieve and falsify Our signs and the meeting of the Hereafter, these people will be exposed to punishment. (17) So glorify Allāh 's purity in the evenings and in the mornings. (18) All praise is for Him in the heavens and the earth, and glorify His purity during the latter part of the day and during the afternoons. (19) He extracts the living from the dead, the dead from the living and revives the earth after its death. Thus will you be resurrected.

THERE WILL BE VARIOUS GROUPS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT (QIYĀMAH)

"Allāh initiated creation and will recreate it (after its demise), after which you will all be returned to Him {on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah)}." Describing the Day of Judgment (*Qiyāmah*), Allāh says, "The day when judgment day (*Qiyāmah*) will dawn, the criminals will lose all hope."

The polytheists, who think that the partners they associate with Allāh will intercede on their behalf will be dismally disappointed on the Day of Judgement. Allāh says, *"None of their partners* (which they ascribed to Allāh) *will be intercessors for them and they will reject their partners* (by claiming that they never ascribed these partners to Allāh)."

Describing the different conditions people will face on the Day of Judgment (*Qiyāmah*). Allāh says, *"The day when judgment day (Qiyāmah) will dawn, that day will they be in different conditions. As for those who believe and do good deeds, they will be rejoicing in a garden. As for those who disbelieve and falsify our signs and the meeting of the Hereafter, these people will be exposed to punishment."*

GLORIFYING ALLĀH'S PURITY THROUGHOUT THE DAY

"So glorify Allāh's purity in the evenings and in the mornings... and during the latter part of the day and during the afternoons." These verses urge the believers (*Mu'minīn*) to engage in Tasbīh (*glorifying*) during these hours of the day.

Allāh says further, *"All praise is for Him in the heavens and the earth..."* The angels in the heavens and all the believers (*Mu'minīn*) on earth praise Allāh. In fact, even the existence of the disbelievers is ample praise for Allāh, Who created them all. This has been discussed in the commentary of verse 41 of Surah Nūr, where Allāh says, *"Do you not see that everyone in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allāh, including the birds with their wings spread out? Each one knows its Salāh and method of glorification."* [*Surah 24, verse 41*]

Although people should always glorify Allāh, the above occasions are specified because it is during these times that Allāh's bounties are most manifest. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that, when Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه was asked where the five daily Salāh are mentioned in the Qur'ān, he recited the above verses saying that the *"evenings"* refers to the Maghrib Salāh, *"mornings"* refers to the Fajr Salāh, *"the latter part of the day"* refers to the Asr Salāh, and *"the afternoons"* refers to the Zuhr Salāh. Thus, four Salāh are mentioned in these verses; and the Isha Salāh is referred to in a verse of Surah Nūr where Allāh says, *"...and after the Isha Salāh."* According to another narration, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentioned that the Maghrib and Isha Salāh are referred to in the word *"evenings."*

Because of the fact that Salāh is an embodiment of Tasbīh (*glorifying*), the Fardh (*obligatory*) Salāh have been made compulsory during the above times. Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh has made the five daily Salāh obligatory so whoever will perform these properly, taking care of the correct times and the proper performance of the Ruku (*genuflexion*) and Sajdah (*prostration*), then Allāh has undertaken to forgive

such a person. On the other hand, there is no such undertaking for the one who does not do so. Allāh may forgive him if He wills, otherwise He may punish him. [*"Mishkāt" p. 58*]

The Arabic word 'ishiy' (translated above as *"the latter part of the day"*) actually refers to the period from after midday to sunset. It therefore refers to the Asr Salāh. However, the afternoon Salāh is only referred to thereafter, whereas it precedes the Asr Salāh. Explaining this apparent incongruity, Ulema (*scholars*) have mentioned that the Asr Salāh has received precedence to emphasize its importance because people are generally engrossed in trade during the time Asr, causing them to miss this Salāh. Even people particular about their Salāh tend to miss the Asr Salāh.

Elucidating His power, Allāh says, *"He extracts the living from the dead, the dead from the living..."* Certain commentators have interpreted this to be the lifeless testicles, from which sperm issues to form a living being. Others cite the example of the dead egg, from which a live animal or bird is born. On the other hand a dead egg is issued from a live hen.

Allāh also *"revives the earth after its death."* When Allāh sends the rain, plants flourish from dry earth. Allāh then draws the similitude by saying, *"Thus will you be resurrected."* People will also spring forth from their graves on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

Note: Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who recites the three verses above (*viz, verses 17, 18 and 19*) every morning will receive the reward of all his usual recitations {wirds/wazīfas *(daily performance or task)*} that he may have omitted. Similarly, the one who recites these verses in the evening will receive the full reward of the recitations he may have omitted.

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَنتُم بَشَرٌ تَنتَشِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ
أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ
إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ
وَٱخْتِلَٰفُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَٰنِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّلْعَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ
مَنَامُكُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَٱبْتِغَآؤُكُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ
يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ يُرِيكُمُ ٱلْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً
فَيُحْىِۦ بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَمِنْ
ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَن تَقُومَ ٱلسَّمَآءُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۚ ثُمَّ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ إِذَآ أَنتُمْ

(20) From His signs is that he has created you from sand, after which you became humans spread out on earth. (21) And from His signs is that He has created spouses for you from your own species so that you may find solace with her and He has placed love and mercy between you. There are certainly signs in this for people who contemplate. (22) And from His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the variation of your languages, and colours. There are certainly signs in this for those who have knowledge. (23) And from His signs is your sleep by night and by day, and your seeking from His bounty. There are certainly signs in this for those who listen. (24) And from His signs is that He shows you lightning which kindles fear and hopes. And He sends rain from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death. There are certainly signs in this for people who understand. (25) And from His signs is that the sky and the earth exist by His command. Then, when He will call for you from the earth, you will all immediately emerge. (26) To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Everything is subservient to Him. (27) It is He Who initiated creation and will recreate it, which will be easier for Him. His is the Highest glory in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

A MANIFESTATION OF ALLĀH'S POWER AND THE PROOFS OF ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)*

The above eight verses all describe Allāh's immense power and control of the affairs of the universe. Allāh repeatedly mentions that these are signs of His magnificence. On four occasions, He states:

- *"There are certainly signs in this for people who contemplate."*
- *"There are certainly signs in this for those who have knowledge."*
- *"There are certainly signs in this for those who listen."*
- *"There are certainly signs in this for people who understand."*

By pondering over these verses, a person will realise Allāh's great powers and grandeur. The verses that follow depict the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*

Allāh begins by saying, *"From His signs is that he has created you [i.e. your father, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام] from sand, after which you became humans spread out on earth."*

Allāh begins Surah Nisā by stating, *"O Mankind, fear your Lord who created you from a single soul [Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام], created from it its spouse, and spread from the two multitudes of men and women."* [*Surah, 3 verse 1*]

After creating Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام from a lifeless thing like sand, Allāh

created his spouse, Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام. From these two, the rest of mankind flourished and prospered. Just as He created man from soil, He can resurrect him from the same soil on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, as He says, *"Thus will you be resurrected."*

The second sign is mentioned in the following words, *"And from His signs is that He has created spouses for you from) 'your own species so that you may find solace with her..."* If Allāh had not created spouses for man, life would be exceptionally difficult for him. So too would it be if the spouses were not from his own species. The verse makes it clear that the purpose of the spouse will be fulfilled when the couple are a source of comfort for each other. Women who are temperamental and disobedient become a scourge to their husbands.

Regarding the wives, Allāh says further, *"..... and He has placed love and mercy between you."* Even if husband and wife are from two totally different backgrounds, yet they share an unbreakable bond of love and compassion between them. This is only because of Allāh's special favour and grace.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that one would not see anything more conducive to fostering love between two people than marriage. [*"Mishkāt' p. 268*]

Since the married couple intend to spend their lives together in a legitimate union, they will be prepared to accommodate each other in an effort to remain peacefully together. Certain commentators have mentioned that the word *"love"* refers specifically to the early ages of the couple, when the satiation of their instincts force them to love each other. Thereafter, when they reach old age, they require mercy between themselves because of the stifling of their carnal passions. It is then when they usually suffer illnesses and require the merciful tenderness of each other.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised men to marry women who are loving and who are able to bear children so that he can be proud of the large numbers of his Ummah on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. [*"Mishkāt" p. 267*]

The illicit union of couples outside the bond of marriage is merely to satiate carnal passions and cannot foster love. People involved in such affairs change partners whenever they feel dissatisfied with one. Since the association is not condoned by the Shari'ah, true love can never exist. These affairs, which are common in the west, produce false notions of love, which can be dissolved at the slightest provocation.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "After fear for Allāh, the believer *(Mu'min)* cannot receive a boon greater than a good wife. If he instructs her to do something, she obeys, and she pleases him when he looks at her. If he takes an oath, she aids him to fulfil the oath and, if he has to be out, she takes care of her chastity and his property." [*"Mishkāt" p. 268*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "No believing man should detest his believing wife. If he dislikes some trait in her, he should then take a liking to another trait." [*Muslim*]

"There are certainly signs in this for people who contemplate." If one has to ponder deeply about the relationship between man and wife, one would

perceive Allāh's great power behind it.

Allāh presents the third and fourth signs in the following manner: *"And from His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the variation of your languages and colours."* Each day man has the opportunity to look at Allāh's immense power in the sky above him and in the earth beneath him.

Another great sign of Allāh's power lies in that fact that he has accorded man the ability to converse with each other. Men speak in different languages and dialects. This difference exists despite the fact that Allāh has fixed the places in the mouth and throat from which different sounds emerge, e.g. the "b" and "m" sounds are created when the two lips meet in different ways. A "b" sound cannot be made in the same manner in which a "m" sound is made. In a like manner, all other sounds emerge from different places.

These sounds are then used differently in thousands of languages around the world. These languages have different words and grammatical constructions, while many have letters and ways of pronunciation which others do not have. These differences are so vast that people speaking different languages cannot even pronounce the words of another language. All this displays Allāh's great powers.

In addition to this, it is found that a language may have different dialects, each different from another, by which a person's origin may be ascertained. Allāh has also given each person a unique voice by which s/he may be recognised. Male and female voices are also vastly different.

Allāh has also made people of different colours who have different appearances and characteristics. It is only Allāh who can create one species of creation with so many different qualities. Allāh then says, *"There are certainly signs in this for those who have knowledge."*

The fifth and sixth signs are contained in the verse where Allāh says, *"And from His signs is your sleep by night and by day, and your seeking from His bounty."* The first of these is sleep, which Allāh has created. It often occurs that people do not want to sleep, but cannot help themselves. On the other hand, some people try to sleep, but spend the entire night tossing and turning restlessly. Only Allāh grants sleep to people and He can also deprive them of the same. It is for this reason that Muslims are required to recite the relevant du'ās (*supplications*) for sleeping and awakening. In doing so, they are reminded of Allāh's favour. The du'ā (*supplication*) for awakening is:

[**TRANSLATION:** "All praise be to Allāh who has granted us life after granting us death (sleep), and to Him shall we be gathered (after death on the Day of judgement).]

Allāh speaks about sleep during the day because many people sleep during the afternoons (called qaylūla in Arabic). There are also many who work during the nights and have to sleep during the day.

The other bounty of Allāh mentioned is "seeking from His bounty" i.e. earning a living. Only Allāh can grant a person the ability and health to earn a living. It is up to man to reflect upon all these bounties. Allāh then says, *"There*

are certainly signs in this for those who listen."

"And from His signs is that He shows you lightning, which kindles fear and hopes." This is the seventh sign Allāh discusses. The lightning builds people's hopes that rain is imminent, which brings great benefit. Thereafter, the eighth sign is expressed as *"And He sends rain from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death."* The rains cause dry and parched land to flourish with foliage in a very short while. *"There are certainly signs in this for people who understand."*

"And from His signs is that the sky and the earth exist by His command." Three verses previously, Allāh made mention of the heavens and the earth being part of His creation. In this verse, Allāh refers to the fact that these great phenomena are being maintained solely by Him. They will remain in existence for as long as Allāh desires and on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)* they will be destroyed. It is only by Allāh's will that the skies and the earth exist as Allāh has created them initially.

Allāh says in Surah Fātir, *"Verily Allāh withholds the heavens and the earth from moving. If they were ever to move, there will be none to withhold them after Him. Indeed He is Tolerant, Most Forgiving."* [*Surah 35, verse 41*]

When Allāh will ordain that trumpet be blown for the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, everything will cease to exist and, upon the second blowing, everyone will be summoned to appear before Him. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"Then, when He will call for you from the earth* (i.e. call you from your graves), *you will all immediately emerge.*

Allāh then declares His Omnipotence when He says, *"To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Everything is subservient to Him."*

'It is He who initiated the creation and will recreate it, which will be easier for Him." Although every action is simple for Allāh, He says that recreation will be easier so that man may not consider it impossible. The statement is merely to facilitate easier understanding for man, because this is how man behaves.

Allāh says in a hadith Qudsi, "The son of Ādam falsifies Me when he says, 'Allāh created me the first time and will never resurrect me.' However, recreating him will be easier than the initial creation" [*Bukhari*]. Allāh possesses the same power and might now as He possessed then.

"His is the Highest glory in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise." This verse means that all the creation in the heavens and the earth realise that Allāh's glory is supreme. He is perfectly Capable of resurrecting people because He is Mighty. According to His wisdom, He has appointed the time for Ressurection day *(Qiyāmah)*.

ضَرَبَ لَكُم مَّثَلًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ هَل لَّكُم مِّن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُم مِّن شُرَكَآءَ فِي مَا
رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ فَأَنتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ
الْأَيَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿28﴾ بَلِ اتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا أَهْوَآءَهُم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۖ فَمَن

يَهْدِي مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ ۖ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

(28) Allāh coins a similitude for you from your own selves. Are any of those (slaves) whom you own shareholders in the wealth which we have given you, making you all equal? And do you then fear them as you have fear for yourselves? Thus do We expound signs for people of understanding. (29) However, the oppressors follow their whims without any knowledge. Who can guide the one whom Allāh has sent astray? They will have no helpers.

ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)* IS PROVEN BY A SIMPLE EXAMPLE

Allāh asks the Polytheists whether they would like their slaves to be shareholders in their wealth, allowing them to spend it freely. Whereas slaves transport and care for the property of their masters, they have no authority to utilise the wealth. Allāh asks the polytheists if they would be pleased with the idea that they would have to seek permission from their slaves to spend their own wealth, as they would have to do if their slaves were to be their partners.

When man dislikes having partners in his property, who are human like himself, how can he expect Allāh to tolerate the behaviour of polytheists, who ascribe such partners to Him, who are incomparably inferior to Him? When others cannot be shareholders in their wealth. how can they assign shareholders in Allāh's right of worship? *"Thus do We expound signs for people of understanding."*

"However, the oppressors follow their whims without any knowledge." These people opt to go astray and ignorantly take any stone or brick as their god. Therefore, Allāh asks, *"Who can guide the one whom Allāh has sent astray?"* They will be subjected to grievous punishment against which *"They will have no helpers."*

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ۞ مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ
وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا
دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا ۖ كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

(30) So, turning away from everything else, focus your attention only on this religion. Follow Allāh's natural endowment, upon which He created mankind. There can be no change to Allāh's creation. This is the upright religion, but most people do not know. (31) Follow the natural endowment turning solely to Allāh, fear Him, establish Salāh and do not be from the polytheists... (32) from those who divided their religion and have been split into many denominations, each denomination being pleased with what it has.

"FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION ONLY ON THIS RELIGION"

Although the verse addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is intended for all of mankind. After it has been proven that polytheism *(shirk)* is a grave error and people have realised that they must accept the belief of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, Allāh commands them to divert their attention from all religions and to adhere strictly to Islām.

"Follow Allāh's natural endowment, upon which He created mankind." Certain commentators have mentioned that *"Allāh's natural endowment"* ('fitrah') refers to the natural ability to accept the religion of Islām.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Every child is born with 'fitrah,' but the parents of the child make the child a Jew, a Christian or a fire-worshipper. Just as a newborn animal is born perfectly healthy, do you see any limbs severed from it?" Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"Follow Allāh's natural endowment, upon which He created mankind. There can be no change to Allāh's creation. This is the upright religion, but most people do not know."* [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

Therefore, every person has been created with the natural ability to accept the truth from birth until death. Even if a person is a non-Muslim, he will be able to revert to Islām if he utilised the clear thinking ability that Allāh has instilled in him. This is referred to in the phrase *"There can be no change to Allāh's creation."* None can alter this built-in capacity within every individual. Of course, if the person opts not to utilise this ability and rather to flee from the truth, he cannot be guided by "fitrah (*nature*)".

Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has translated *"There can be no change to Allāh's creation"* as *"Do not change Allāh's creation (fitrah)."* According to this translation, the verse forbids everything that hinders a person's inclination to accept the truth e.g. irreligious literature and propagation. People are then also prohibited from attending gatherings in which things may be said, which will weaken his/her inclination to accept the truth (fitrah).

"This is the upright religion, but most people do not know. Follow the natural endowment turning solely to Allāh, fear Him, establish Salāh and do not be from the polytheists (viz.) from those who divided their religion and have been split into many denominations, each denomination being pleased with what it has." The true religion always remains one and cannot be divided. One can follow only a single road and no other.

The various denominations found in Islām today are not really part of Islām. Only those people who follow the Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم may be included as part of Islām, like the followers of the four schools of Islāmic jurisprudence. Those who do not conform to the Qur'ān and Ahādīth cannot be regarded as Muslims even though they claim to be Muslims.

وَإِذَا مَسَّ ٱلنَّاسَ ضُرٌّ دَعَوْا۟ رَبَّهُم مُّنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَذَاقَهُم مِّنْهُ رَحْمَةً إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ لِيَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ فَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ أَمْ

أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنًا فَهُوَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَإِذَآ أَذَقْنَا ٱلنَّاسَ
رَحْمَةً فَرِحُوا۟ بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَقْنَطُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

(33) When people are afflicted by an adversity, they call to their Lord, turning only to Him. Then, when He allows them to taste of His mercy, suddenly a group of them ascribe partners to their Lord... (34) ....so as to be ungrateful for what We give them. Enjoy yourselves! Soon you will come to know. (35) Or have We revealed a warrant to them, whereby they speak about what they ascribe as partners to Allāh? (36) When We allow people to taste of Our mercy, they revel in it. However, when any adversity afflicts them on account of the sins they commit, they suddenly lose hope.

MAN'S ATTITUDE TO GOOD FORTUNE AND ADVERSITY

Describing man's nature, Allāh says, *"When people are afflicted by an adversity, they call to their Lord, turning only to Him (to alleviate their difficulty). Then, when He allows them to taste of His mercy (by removing the difficulty), suddenly a group of them ascribe partners to their Lord."* In doing so, they are being "ungrateful for what We give them."

Allāh addresses such people saying, *"Enjoy yourselves!. Soon you will come to know."* A similar address was discussed towards the end of Surah Ankabūt [*Surah 29, verses 65, 66*].

Since the polytheists know that their gods cannot help them at times of adversity, they supplicate to Allāh during such trying periods. However, they still foolishly adhere to their practices and beliefs without any warrant. Allāh says, *"Or have We revealed a warrant* (scripture) *to them, whereby* (i.e. on the authority of which) *they speak about what they ascribe as partners to Allāh."* The polytheists have absolutely no justification for their beliefs.

"When We allow people to taste of Our mercy, they revel in it." This revelling causes them to transgress all limits and to forget Allāh's favour on them. They then disobey Allāh's commands and fall into sin. It is with regard to such revelling that Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"Verily Allāh does not like those who revel* (also translated as *'Allāh does not like the boastful'*)." [*Surah 28, verse 76*]

Allāh then describes the opposite side of man when He says, *"However, when any adversity afflicts them on account of the sins they commit, they suddenly lose hope."* They then behave as if they have never been blessed with any favours.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ
﴿٣٧﴾ فَـَٔاتِ ذَا ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُم مِّن رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَا۟ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ فَلَا
يَرْبُوا۟ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُم مِّن زَكَوٰةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ ٱللَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُضْعِفُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَآئِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَىْءٍ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

(37) Do they not see that Allāh increases sustenance for whoever He wills and straitens? There are certainly signs in this for the believing folk. (38) So give the relative his right, as well as the poor and the traveller. That is best for those who seek Allāh's pleasure. These are the successful people. (39) Whatever usury you give to increase people's wealth does not increase in Allāh's sight. Whatever you give in Zakāh, seeking Allāh's pleasure, such people truly multiply (their rewards). (40) It is Allāh Who has created you, then sustains you, will then give you death and again give you life. Are there any of your partners who can do any of this? Allāh is Pure and Exalted above the partners they ascribe to Him.

THE COMMAND TO SPEND ON RELATIVES, THE POOR AND TRAVELLERS, AND THE VIRTUE OF SPENDING FOR ALLĀH'S PLEASURE

"Do they not see that Allāh increases sustenance for whoever He wills and straitens?" This fact is apparent to one and all. While some people enjoy an abundance of sustenance, others live from hand to mouth. While some earn very little after great exertion, others receive much more without any effort. There are many who have even lost their huge capital investments after much effort and planning. On the other hand, many people have only to invest a small amount which multiplies itself many fold and accumulates into millions. This is all Allāh's will and His divine plan.

Allāh tests people with wealth and also with poverty, as He deems fit according to His wisdom. While some people will fall into sin on account of their wealth, others will fall into sin because of their poverty. *"There are certainly signs in this for the believing folk."*

"So give the relative his right, as well as the poor and the traveller." Commentators say that Zakāh is not implied in this verse because Surah Rūm was revealed in Makkah, while Zakāh was only made obligatory in Madinah. The verse refers to optional charity and spending on relatives in an effort to maintain good relations.

"That is best for those who seek Allāh's pleasure. These are the successful people." The condition for the acceptance of this charity is that it must be done to attain Allāh's pleasure and the giver should never remind the recipient of his favour.

The details of spending on relatives, the poor, orphans and travellers have been discussed in the commentary of verse 177 of Surah Baqarah (*Surah 2*) and verse 26 of Surah Bani Isrā'īl (*Surah 17*). Further details of the virtues and etiquette of spending for Allāh's pleasure have also been discussed in the commentary of verses 261 to 273 of Surah Baqarah.

"Whatever usury you give to increase people's wealth does not increase in Allāh's sight." The literal meaning of the Arabic word 'riba' (usury) is 'to increase.' Therefore 'riba' will refer to anything which increases and grows, although the

word is generally used for interest. Much mention of interest has been made in verses 275 to 281 of Surah Baqarah.

The verse tells man that, although it appears that he will be earning more money when he loans money on interest, the additional earnings will be void of blessings because it is Harām. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah *"Allāh blighted usury and increases charity."* [*Surah 2, verse 276*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Although the money earned by interest multiplies, it will result in eventual loss." [*"Mishkāt" p. 246*]

Earning money from interest deprives one of inner peace and contentment, while it is eventually destroyed when banks report insolvency, or when wealth is destroyed by natural disasters. Of course, this wealth will be completely destroyed in the Hereafter, where it will earn people the punishment of Hell.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when a person gives charity from Harām (*unlawful*) wealth, it will not be accepted from him, and there will be no blessings in whatever he spends from it. Whatever he leaves behind him of it will be a source of admitting him into Hell [*"Mishkāt" p. 242*]. Further details pertaining to usury have been discussed in the commentary of verses 275 to 281 of Surah Baqarah.

Some commentators have mentioned that the verse refers to those gifts which people give to others in the hope that the recipient will give then something better in return. This gift will not earn any rewards from Allāh. While the giver should not aspire to receive anything in return, the recipient should make an attempt to return the favour when the opportunity arises. However, he should not mention that the gift is in appreciation of the one received.

Upon receipt of a gift, the recipient should say, *"JazākAllāh"* ("May Allāh reward you"). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that a person who receives a gift should give something in return if he can. If he cannot give something in return, he should tell others about the generosity of the giver. The person who does so will have expressed his gratitude and the one who fails to do so will be ungrateful. [*"Mishkāt" p. 261*]

The giver of the gift should not aspire for any return, not even a word of thanks. They should say what Allāh teaches in Surah Dahar, i.e. *"We feed you only for Allāh's pleasure and desire neither a return, nor thanks from you."* [*Surah 9, verse 76*]

It was the practice of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to give in return more than a person gave him. A villager once presented to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a young camel as a gift, in return of which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave him six such camels. [*"Mishkāt" p. 261*]

Allāh continues to say, *"Whatever you give in Zakāh, seeking Allāh 's pleasure, such people truly multiply (their rewards from Allāh).* "Commentators have also interpreted the word "Zakāh" to mean optional charity for the same reason cited above. The literal meaning of Zakāh is 'to purify.' Therefore, since any type of charity purifies the soul from miserliness, it may be referred to as 'Zakāh' as

well.

When Allāh accepts a deed, He multiplies the reward a minimum of ten times, as He says, *"Whosoever does a good deed will receive tenfold the like thereof"* Of course, Allāh multiplies rewards even more than ten times if He wills.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever donates in charity the equivalent of a single date from Halāl sources, Allāh will accept it and increase the reward, just as one of you will raise a young foal. Eventually, the date will reach the equivalent of a mountain" [*Bukhari*].

People will be shocked at the mountainous size of their rewards on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

"It is Allāh Who has created you, then sustains you, will then give you death and again give you life. Are there any of your partners who can do any of this? Allāh is Pure and Exalted above the partners they ascribe to Him." This verse portrays Allāh's great power, thereby proving that only He should be worshipped because none other can compare to Him.

ظَهَرَ ٱلْفَسَادُ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِى ٱلنَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُم بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى عَمِلُوا
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (41) قُلْ سِيرُوا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلُ
كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّشْرِكِينَ (42) فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ ٱلْقَيِّمِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا مَرَدَّ
لَهُۥ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصَّدَّعُونَ (43) مَن كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ كُفْرُهُۥ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلِأَنفُسِهِمْ
يَمْهَدُونَ (44) لِيَجْزِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
(45)

(41) Corruption has appeared on land and at sea because of the deeds of man and so that Allāh may let them taste (the consequences) of some of their deeds, so that they may refrain. (42) Say, "Travel in the lands and see what was the plight of those before. Most of them were polytheists." (43) So focus your attention on the upright religion before a day comes when there will be no defence against Allāh. On that day people will be separated. (44) Whoever disbelieves, his disbelief will be to his detriment. Whoever carries out a good deed, such people will be preparing the ground for themselves... (45) .. .so that Allāh may reward those who believe and do good deeds from His grace. Without doubt, Allāh does not like the disbelievers.

CORRUPTION ON EARTH OCCURS BECAUSE OF PEOPLE'S SINS

Allāh has granted man the option to do good and evil deeds so that He may test them. Man is exposed to elements both within himself and from outside which tempt him to be disobedient to Allāh's commands. However, Allāh has

sent the Prophets عليهم السلام to guide man in the right direction and warn him about the consequences of his deeds. One of these consequences is that anarchy and strife begin to reign on earth. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"Corruption has appeared on land and at sea because of the deeds of man..."*

The *"corruption"* mentioned in this verse refers to all types of adversities like widespread murder, epidemics, drought, cyclones, earthquakes, etc. Allāh afflicts man with all these adversities so that he may take heed and mend his ways when he realises that these calamities are a result of his sins. Allāh refers to this, when He says, *so that Allāh may let them taste (the consequences) of some of their deeds, so that they may refrain."*

Allāh does not punish man for all his sins, but for some of them, as the verse denotes. Allāh says in Surah Fātir, *"If Allāh were to take man to task for everything he does, Allāh would not have left a single creature on the face of the earth. But Allāh defers them until an appointed term."* [*Surah 35, verse 45*]

A verse of Surah Shura reads: *"The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn, and Allāh pardons a great deal."* [*Surah 42, verse 30*]

The corruption that sins may cause on land are evident. With regard to one of the ill effects of sin on the sea, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentions that oysters open their mouths when rain falls at sea. A raindrop in the oyster's mouth causes a precious pearl to form. When man sins, Allāh stops the rains falling, because of which man is deprived of pearls. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه that the negative effect of sins causes tyrannical rulers to snatch away the marine vessels of the poor. There are many other examples of pirating and shipwrecks, which are all a result of sins.

When Allāh's punishment descends on account of man's sins, not even the pious and the animals are spared. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه once overheard a person saying that an oppressor harms only himself by his sins. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه said, "This is not so. All the other creation also suffer because of him, to the extent that a bustard bird can die of starvation because of the oppression of a tyrant." [*"Mishkāt" p. 432*]

When droughts are caused by sins, man and animal suffer from the scarcity of water and food. It should be noted that the verse does not refer to the sufferings that pious people suffer. Allāh afflicts them with difficulties so that He may elevate their positions and forgive them. Adversities are a blessing for such people because their patience will earn them immense rewards from Allāh.

"Say, 'Travel in the lands and see what was the plight of those before. Most of them were polytheists."' These people were annihilated by Allāh's punishment because they refused to believe in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*. People are urged to visit the ruins of their cities and take lesson from it. The phrase *'Most of them were polyt heists"* denotes that there were others among them who perpetrated other types of disbelief as well, but the most destructive sin is that of shirk (polytheism).

"So focus your attention on the upright religion {i.e. belief in oneness of Allāh (Tauhīd)} before a day judgment (Qiyāmah) comes to you in which there will be no defence against (the punishment of) Allāh. On that day people will be separated." Those who were good will be separated from the evildoers.

Describing the difference of people, Allāh says, *"Whoever disbelieves, his disbelief will be to his detriment. Whoever carries out a good deed, such people will be preparing the ground for themselves so that Allāh may reward those who believe and do good deeds from His grace. Without doubt, Allāh does not like the disbelievers."* Allāh loves only those people who have belief *(Imān)*, and will reward them in both worlds for their good deeds.

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَن يُرْسِلَ ٱلرِّيَاحَ مُبَشِّرَٰتٍ وَلِيُذِيقَكُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِهِۦ وَلِتَجْرِىَ ٱلْفُلْكُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟
مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿46﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ رُسُلًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ فَجَآءُوهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ
فَٱنتَقَمْنَا مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا۟ وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿47﴾ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى يُرْسِلُ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ
فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَيَبْسُطُهُۥ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ كَيْفَ يَشَآءُ وَيَجْعَلُهُۥ كِسَفًا فَتَرَى ٱلْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ
خِلَٰلِهِۦ فَإِذَآ أَصَابَ بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦٓ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿48﴾ وَإِن كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِ أَن
يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن قَبْلِهِۦ لَمُبْلِسِينَ ﴿49﴾ فَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِ رَحْمَتِ ٱللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْىِ
ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿50﴾ وَلَئِنْ أَرْسَلْنَا
رِيحًا فَرَأَوْهُ مُصْفَرًّا لَّظَلُّوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿51﴾

(46) From His signs is that He sends the winds as bearers of glad tidings to let people taste of His mercy and to allow ships to sail by His command so that you seek from His bounty, and so that you may show gratitude. (47) Undoubtedly, We have sent many messengers before you to their nations, who brought clear signs to them. We then exacted revenge from those who sinned. Rendering assistance to the believers has always been Our bounden responsibility. (48) It is Allāh Who sends the winds, which carry the clouds, spreading them across the sky as He wills. He divides the clouds into fragments, after which you will see rain falling from its midst. When Allāh sends it to those bondsmen whom He wills, they will become exuberant... (49) .... even though, before it was sent to them, they were despondent. (50) So look at the signs of Allāh's mercy and how He revives the earth after its death. Undoubtedly, He gives life to the dead and He has power over all things. (51) Verily, if we have to send a destructive wind and they have to see their fields yellow, they will begin to show ingratitude.

ALLĀH SENDS THE WINDS AND THE RAINS, AND ALLĀH WILL REVIVE THE DEAD

Allāh describes the multiple virtues of the winds when He says, *"From His signs is that He sends the winds as bearers of glad tidings (to foretell rain) to let people taste of His mercy (rain) and to allow ships to sail by His command..."* People sail in ships to earn a living and to transport goods, to which Allāh refers when He says, *"so that you seek from His bounty..."* By reflecting upon all these bounties, mankind should recognise Allāh and be grateful to Him by worshipping only

Him.

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Undoubtedly, We have sent many messengers before you to their nations, who brought clear signs to them."* However, many people refused to accept the message of these Prophets عليهم السلام, because of which Allāh *"exacted revenge from those who sinned"* and destroyed them. Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that those opposing him will also be destroyed in a like manner.

Allāh declares, *"Rendering assistance to the believers has always been Our bounden responsibility."* Allāh will always assist the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, the greatest assistance being safeguarding them from the torment of Hell. They will be admitted to Heaven when they exercise patience in this world.

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh will certainly keep the fire of Hell far from the person who defends the honour of his fellow Muslim brother in his absence. After saying this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse *"Rendering assistance to the believers has always been Our bounden responsibility."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 424*]

Thereafter, Allāh resumes the discussion on the winds. Allāh says, *"it is Allāh Who sends the winds, which carry the clouds, spreading them across the sky as He wills. He divides the clouds into fragments, after which you will see rain falling from its midst. When Allāh sends it to those bondsmen whom He wills, they will become exuberant even though, before it was sent to them, they were despondent."* It is only because of Allāh's bounty that people are given hope after being despondent. It is then that they owe the greatest gratitude to Allāh.

"So look at the signs of Allāh's mercy and how He revives the earth after its death. Undoubtedly, He gives life to the dead and He has power over all things." Therefore, people should never doubt resurrection.

"Verily, if we have to send a destructive wind and they have to see their fields yellow (after being destroyed), *they will begin to show ingratitude."* On this occasion, they forget all the bounties that Allāh has bestowed on them and they remember only the hard times.

فَإِنَّكَ لَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلصُّمَّ ٱلدُّعَآءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا۟ مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿52﴾ وَمَآ أَنتَ بِهَٰدِ
ٱلْعُمْىِ عَن ضَلَٰلَتِهِمْ ۖ إِن تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَهُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿53﴾

(52) You cannot make the dead hear, nor can you make the deaf hear a call when they turn their backs. (53) You cannot guide the blind from their deviation. You can make only those people hear who believe in Our verses and are subservient.

YOU CANNOT MAKE THE DEAD AND THE DEAF HEAR, NOR CAN YOU GUIDE THE BLIND

Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that he is not responsible for those who turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to his preaching, just as he cannot make dead people hear anything. In their negative attitude, the

disbelievers behaved like the dead by failing to utilise their faculties of understanding.

Allāh reminds the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that his duty is merely to convey the message, to which the believers will respond. It is therefore not necessary to grieve over them. A discussion on making the dead hear was given in the commentary of verses 80 and 81 of Surah Naml (*Surah 27*), where Allāh says, *"Verily, you cannot make the dead hear, neither can you make the deaf hear the call when they turn away in aversion. You cannot guide the blind from their deviation. You can guide only those who believe in our verses and who have submitted."*

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِن بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِن بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ ﴿٥٤﴾

(54) It is Allāh Who created you in a state of weakness, then substituted strength after the weakness and, after the strength, will again give weakness and old-age. Allāh creates whatever He wills, and He is the All Knowing, Omnipotent.

THE VARIOUS STAGES OF MAN'S WEAKNESS

In the above verse, Allāh describes how He created man as a weak and frail child. The newborn baby cannot move by itself, nor can it do anything for itself. It is only after a while that the child begins to sense things and look about. He gradually learns to sit, walk and then run and talk. It is after many years that he develops into a strong young man, who can fend for himself. He then reaches the peak of his physical and mental capabilities.

Eventually, he begins to recede into another phase of weakness. His faculties begin to deteriorate and his health dwindles. Many people even reach the age of senility, when their minds become useless. At this stage, man again becomes a child. Allāh says in Surah Yā Sīn, *"He whom We advance in age, We diminish in* (physical) *structure. Do they not understand?"* [*Surah 36, verse 68*]

"Allāh creates whatever He wills, and He is the All Knowing, Omnipotent." Allāh has all the power and ability to create and fashion as He pleases.

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ كَذَٰلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَالْإِيمَانَ لَقَدْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ فَهَٰذَا يَوْمُ الْبَعْثِ وَلَٰكِنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يَنفَعُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَعْذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

(55) The day when Judgment (Qiyāmah) will dawn, the criminals will swear on oath saying, "We never tarried more than a moment." In this manner were they

ever retrogressing. (56) Those given knowledge and belief (Imān) will say, "By Allāh's Book, you lived until the Day of Resurrection. This is now that Day of Resurrection, but you never understood." (57) On this day, the excuses of the oppressors will not profit them, neither will they be afforded the opportunity.

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL TAKE FALSE OATHS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*, WHILE THE BELIEVERS WILL DECLARE THE TRUTH

"The day when Judgment (Qiyāmah) will dawn, the criminals will swear on oath saying, 'We never tarried more than a moment.'" They will say this with reference to the time they spend in the grave or, according to other commentators, the time they passed in the world.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has mentioned that they will mean by this statement that their lives in the world passed unprofitably because they never believed in Allāh and His Prophets عليهم السلام. Therefore, even if their lives were long, it will be considered extremely short because it did not profit them in the least. This statement is similar to someone referring to a short while as being very long because of the great benefits accrued from it.

Declaring the life of the grave or of this world to be a brief moment is not the first lie that these people will have spoken. They began lying in this very world when they falsified the teachings of the Prophets عليهم السلام and were *"ever ret rogressing."*

When these people will take their oaths, *"Those given knowledge and belief (Imān)* (from the angels and mankind) *will say, 'By Allāh's Book* (*the Lowhul Mahfūdh*), *you lived until the Day of Resurrection."* Allāh has decreed in the Lowhul Mahfūdh (*protected tablet*) (as mentioned in Surah Mu'minūn), *"Behind them* (the deceased) is *"Barzakh" until the day that they are resurrected* (i.e. they shall remain in their graves until the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*)." [*Surah 23, verse 100*]

Further admonishing the disbelievers, the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will say, *"This is now that Day of Resurrection, but you never understood."* They refuted the advent of this day, because of which they would have to suffer.

Allāh then says, *"On this day, the excuses of the oppressors will not profit them, neither will they be afforded the opportunity (to make excuses to satisfy Allāh)."* Taubah (*repentence*) cannot profit a person after his death.

وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَلَئِن جِئْتَهُم بِآيَةٍ لَّيَقُولَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا مُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ وَلَا يَسْتَخِفَّنَّكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

(58) We have undoubtedly expounded every type of excellent subject for

people in this Qur'ān. If you bring to them a sign, the disbelievers will definitely say, "You are merely people of falsehood." (59) Thus has Allāh set a seal upon the hearts of those without knowledge. (60) So exercise patience. Allāh's promise is certainly true. Let not those without conviction make you impatient.

THE QUR'ĀN CONTAINS THE MOST EXCELLENT SUBJECTS AND THE COMMAND TO BE PATIENT

"We have undoubtedly expounded every type of excellent subject for people in this Qur'ān." Any sensible person will realise that the Qur'ān is truly Allāh's scripture if he gives thought to the matters discussed in it. They will then also realise that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is Allāh's true messenger. However, there will always be those who are bent on obstinacy and will not admit the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān. In a like manner, they will not also accept any other miracle. Allāh says, *"If you bring to them a sign (miracle), the disbelievers will definitely say, 'You are merely people of falsehood.'"*

It has always been the practice of the disbelievers to reject the truth and label the people of truth as "people of falsehood." With regard to them Allāh says further, *"Thus has Allāh set a seal upon the hearts of those without knowledge."*

The disbelievers and polytheists harassed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on every possible occasion. With regard to this, Allāh addresses him saying, *"So exercise patience. Allāh 's promise is certainly true."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is urged to take courage from Allāh's promise of assistance and the supremacy of Islām. The concluding piece of advice is: *"Let not those without conviction make you impatient."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is urged not to be derailed by the disbelievers, but to remain a solid pillar of courage.

سورة لقمان

Makkan	Surah Luqmān	Verses 34

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

الٓمٓ (1) تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ (2) هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْمُحْسِنِينَ (3) ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ (4) أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ (5)

In the name of Allāh, The Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Mīm. (2) These are verses of the Wise Book. (3) A guidance and mercy for those who do good... (4) .... those who establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and are convinced about the Hereafter. (5) These people are upon guidance from their Lord and they are the truly successful ones.

THE QUR'ĀN IS A GUIDANCE AND MERCY FOR THOSE WHO DO GOOD

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that Surah Luqmān was revealed in Makkah, while another narration of his states that verses 26 to 29 were revealed in Madinah.

Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"These are verses of the Wise Book* (which is) *A guidance and mercy for those who do good."* Although the Qur'ān is a guidance for all of mankind, it is those with good hearts and sincerity who will accept the guidance and practice accordingly.

Describing *"those who do good"* Allāh says that they are *"Those who establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and are convinced about the Hereafter."* Salāh and Zakāh follow belief *(Imān)* as the fundamental pillars of Islām. They are followed by fasting and Hajj, but only the two have been mentioned because they are more important. When a person is particular about Salāh and Zakāh, while also being convinced about the advent of the Hereafter, all the other aspects of Islām will be easy for him.

Allāh describes *"those who do good"* further when He says, *"These people are upon guidance from their Lord and they are the truly successful ones."* These verses have been discussed in the commentary of verse 5 of Surah Baqarah.

Because of the fact that this Surah makes mention of Zakāh, certain commentators are of the opinion that this Surah was revealed in Madinah because Zakāh became obligatory only in Madinah. However, other commentators maintain that the Surah was revealed in Makkah, and that Zakāh was already made obligatory in Makkah. They say that only the detailed laws pertaining to Zakāh were revealed in Madinah.

However, if Zakāh is interpreted to mean normal charity (as discussed in verse 39 of the previous Surah), there would be no debate about the place of revelation.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَشۡتَرِى لَهۡوَ ٱلۡحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِغَيۡرِ عِلۡمٍ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًاۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ۝٦ وَإِذَا تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِ ءَايَٰتُنَا وَلَّىٰ مُسۡتَكۡبِرًا كَأَن لَّمۡ يَسۡمَعۡهَا كَأَنَّ فِيٓ أُذُنَيۡهِ وَقۡرًاۖ فَبَشِّرۡهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ۝٧ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ۝٨ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَاۖ وَعۡدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقًّاۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ۝٩

(6) There are some people who purchase futile discourse to deviate from Allāh's path without knowledge, making a mockery of it (Allāh's path). There shall be a humiliating punishment for these people. (7) When Our verses are recited to them, they arrogantly turn away as if they have not heard them, as if there is a prop in their ears. Convey the tidings of an excruciating punishment to them. (8) For those who believe and do good deeds, there are the blissful gardens of Jannah (Heaven)... (9) .... where they will abide forever. Allāh's has made a true promise, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

A HUMILIATING PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE QUR'ĀN

After asserting that the Qur'ān is a guidance and mercy for those who accept it, Allāh discusses those people who oppose the Qur'ān and ridicule it. Allāh discusses those people who purchased *'futile discourse"* in an effort to turn people away from the Qur'ān. The term *'futile discourse"* refers to anything that distracts a person from Allāh's remembrance and involves him in play and sport. Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that *'futile discourse" is* anything that distracts one away from worshipping Allāh and thinking about Him.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه have interpreted *'futile discourse"* as music, while Sayyidina Makhūl رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that it refers to hiring female dancers.

Many narrations have been reported with regard to the circumstances surrounding the revelation of this verse. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that an arch enemy of Islām by the name of Nadhar bin Hārith purchased a singing slave girl. Whenever he heard about anyone who intended to accept

Islām, he would send the person to this girl, who was instructed to feed the man well and to sing for him. He would then ask the person whether this was better or the Salāh, fasting and fighting in Jihād, which Islām required from a Muslim. By this means, he persuaded them to change their minds. The verse makes reference to this incident.

Another narration reports that Nadhar often travelled to Persia, where he bought books containing fanciful Persian tales, He would recite these to the Quraysh and tell them that he narrated these fanciful tales of Persian kings like Rustam and tales of Alexander of Macedonia, while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them only about the Ād and the Thamud. So saying, he mocked the narratives contained in the Qur'ān. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verse.

Other commentators mention that the verse was revealed with reference to a person called Ibn Khatal who bought some singing slave. girls who sang songs that ridiculed Islām and the Muslims.

The above interpretation of *'futile discourse"* by Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه is corroborated by a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that every futile act may be regarded as part of falsehood, except the following three seemingly playful acts:

1. *Archery.*
2. *Training one's horse (both these are necessary for Jihād).*
3. *Playful behaviour with one's wife.*

THE ABOMINATION AND PROHIBITION OF MUSIC

"futile discourse" would include all acts that distract one from Salāh and remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*, such as gambling, sport, etc. These will therefore be forbidden in the Sharī'ah. If Allāh has granted someone a beautiful voice, it should rather be used to recite the Qur'ān, or to recite some thought provoking poetry, reminding people of the Hereafter. It should never be used to sing romantic and other songs, which are sung with musical instruments.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Music causes hypocrisy to grow in the heart just as rain causes crops to flourish." [*"Mishkāt" p. 411*]

The person gifted with a good voice should not sing even permissible poetry in the presence of women. Bukhari reports a hadith in which a Sahabi by the name of Anjasha رضى الله عنه was singing the customary verses of poetry (called 'huddy') on journey to urge the camels to trod faster. He was singing in a beautiful voice, because of which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "O Anjasha! Stop! Do not break the glass." The narrator of the hadith, Sayyidina Qatāda رضى الله عنه, says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was referring to the women, who are usually affected by sweet singing.

It is unfortunate that music has become a way of life for people today. It seems as if people cannot digest their food without listening to music. Old and young are involved in this evil, which causes them to miss their Salāh. Even

people from respectable homes consider it a virtue to teach their children to sing, dance and play musical instruments.

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that singing slave girls must not be purchased or sold, they should not be taught to sing, and the money earned by this trade is Harām (*unlawful*). He mentioned that the verse *"There are some people who purchase futile discourse to deviate from Allāh 's path..."* was revealed in this regard.

Sayyidina Abu Sahyā رحمة الله عليه reports that he once asked Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه about this verse. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه took an oath in Allāh's name that the verse condemns music. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 490*]

People have dug their own graves of destruction because of their deep involvement in music. It is tragic that they then refuse to acknowledge that the calamities they suffer are a result of their sins. Even if they are forced to admit this, they fail to mend their ways. The reason for this is that they have all become slaves of their passions.

Sayyidina Abu Āmir Ash'ari رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There will certainly be such people in my Ummah who will make fornication, wearing of silk (for men), liquor and musical instruments Halāl (*lawful*). There will also be people living by a mountain, whose flock of animals will reach them by the evenings. When someone will approach them for a necessity, they will bid him to return the following day, but they will all be destroyed before the following day, when the mountain will crush them. Some of these people will be transfigured into pigs and monkeys until the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*." [*"Mishkāt" p. 456*]

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS COMMANDED TO DESTROY MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh has sent me as a mercy and a guide for both worlds and He has commanded me to destroy musical instruments, idols, the cross, and all practices of ignorance." [*"Mishkāt" p. 318*]

Muslims should now realise the error of their ways when, to render their poems in the praise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they utilise the same musical instruments which he wanted to destroy. Worse still is that they think that they will be rewarded for this. While the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent to destroy these instruments, these Muslims while the nights away playing and listening to the sounds of these instruments. They do this in the name of love for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, yet they forsake their Salāh in the process. Are they pleasing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم or Satan *(Shaytān)*?

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Bells are the flutes of Shaytān."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 338*]

The beloved Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in another hadith, "The angels of mercy do not accompany the party travelling with bells or dogs." [*"Mishkāt" p.*

379]

Once a girl entered in the presence of Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها wearing jewellery on her feet which jingled. Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها instructed that the girl be removed from her presence until the jewellery was removed. She then said that she heard the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم say, "The angels of mercy do not enter a house within there are bells."

Music is the practice of Satan *(Shaytān)*. It is for this reason that one will find music rife in places where Satan *(Shaytān)* is sovereign, like in temples and churches.

THE EVIL PRACTICE OF CERTAIN "SAINTS"

It is a practice of certain "saints" (commonly called "pīrs") that they have to drums and other musical instruments played in their gatherings and at gravesides. They claim that the senior saints approved of this, whereas the same saints they quote, actually prohibited gatherings where musical instruments, beardless lads and women are present.

Even if some 'saint' did condone the deed, it will be rejected because it contradicts the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم. Islām does not tolerate even jewellery and garlands that make musical sounds. How can it tolerate musical gatherings?

Sayyidina Nāfi رحمة الله علیه reports that he was once travelling with Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه when they heard the sound of a flute. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه immediately covered his ears and walked away from the path. It was only after proceeding some distance away, that he asked Sayyidina Nāfi رحمة الله علیه whether the sound was still audible. When he was informed that the sound was no longer audible, he removed his fingers from his ears saying, "I was once travelling with the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, when we heard the sound of a flute. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did exactly as I had done." Sayyidina Nāfi رحمة الله علیه was a youngster at the time. *["Mishkāt" p. 411]*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم prohibited liquor, gambling, drums and 'ghabīra' (an intoxicating drink brewed in Africa). The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم also said that all intoxicants are Harām (*unlawful*). [*"Mishkāt" p. 318*]

FUTILE PASTIMES

The circumstances surrounding the revelation of the above verse denote that music is the worst of those futilities which distract one from Allāh's remembrance. The Ahadīth condemning music have also been quoted above so that no person can ever regard any type of music as a virtue (especially "Qawāli").

It should also be borne in mind that the time spent in pastimes could have been fruitfully utilised for the recitation of the Qur'ān or some other act of devotion. Some categories of *'futile discourse"* are Harām (*unlawful*) (like gambling and music). While others may be permissible, they are a waste of time (like listening to permissible poems).

THE LAW REGARDING GAMES LIKE CHESS

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضی الله عنه has reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that only sinners play chess and that it is a category of falsehood, which Allāh detests. [*"Mishkāt" p. 387*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the person who plays backgammon has disobeyed Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [*"Mishkāt" p. 386*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports that, upon seeing a person chase a pigeon (as a sport), The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commented, "This is one Satan *(Shaytān)* running after another Satan *(Shaytān)*." [*Ibid*]

The Ahadīth do not make mention of playing cards because it was not prevalent during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is Harām (*unlawful*) to play cards if gambling is involved. If no gambling is involved it will be permitted only if it does not distract one from Allāh's remembrance, which is extremely rare.

Although the verse uses the word *"purchase"* it may refer to any exchange of things, like the substitution of one act for another, as Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"These are the people who have purchased error at the price of guidance."* The verse would therefore also refer to people who substitute the recitation of the Qur'ān with futile activities.

خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيۡرِ عَمَدٖ تَرَوۡنَهَاۖ وَأَلۡقَىٰ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ رَوَٰسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمۡ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَآبَّةٖۚ وَأَنزَلۡنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءٗ فَأَنۢبَتۡنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوۡجٖ كَرِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾ هَٰذَا خَلۡقُ ٱللَّهِ فَأَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦۚ بَلِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ فِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٖ ﴿١١﴾

(10) Allāh created the skies without any visible pillar, has placed mountains on earth so that it does not shake with you and has spread every type of animal on earth. We have sent rain from the sky, thereby growing every species of wonderful plant. (11) This is Allāh's creation, so show me what those besides Him have created. But the oppressors are in a distant deviation.

ALLĀH HAS CREATED THE SKIES, THE EARTH AND THE REST OF THE CREATION, WHILE NO OTHER HAS CREATED ANYTHING

"Allāh created the skies without any visible pillar..." The immense expanse of the sky is suspended without any pillars. It is Allāh's immense power that keeps the sky in place without collapsing.

It is Allāh Who *'has placed mountains on earth so that it does not shake with you..."* If it were not for the mountains lending stability to the earth, the water of the oceans and cyclonic winds would have caused the earth to shudder and shake incessantly. This would wreak havoc on earth and make habitation

impossible. Although Allāh could have held the earth stable without the mountains, he has kept them in place as a means to achieve this end.

Of course, the verse pertains to the general stability of the earth and will not mean that the earth can never convulse when Allāh wants it to. When He desires, Allāh can make the earth shudder with earthquakes, the worst of which will take place on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, as mentioned in numerous verses of the Qur'ān, like Surah Zilzāl (*Surah 99*).

Allāh has also *"spread every type of animal on earth"* throughout the earth. Man may find these animals wherever he is and use them for his living. Allāh then says, *"We have sent rain from the sky, thereby growing every species of wonder ful plant."* This is another of Allāh's great bounties for which man cannot express enough gratitude.

Allāh then declares, *"This is Allāh's creation, so show me what those (who people take as gods) besides Him have created."* The false gods of the polytheists are helpless and dependent on Allāh. The combined efforts of all these gods and their devotees cannot create a single fly, which Allāh creates in overwhelming abundance. Therefore, only Allāh can be worshipped. However, notwithstanding this, *"the oppressors are in a distant deviation."*

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا لُقْمَٰنَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿12﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَٰنُ لِٱبْنِهِۦ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُۥ يَٰبُنَىَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿13﴾ وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُۥ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَٰلُهُۥ فِى عَامَيْنِ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِى وَلِوَٰلِدَيْكَ إِلَىَّ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿14﴾ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ۖ وَٱتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَىَّ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿15﴾

(12) We certainly granted wisdom to Luqmān (inspiring him) to express gratitude to Allāh. Whoever will be grateful to Allāh, expresses gratitude for his own benefit. As for him who is ungrateful, Allāh is certainly Independent, Most Worthy of praise. (13) (The time deserves mention) when Luqmān advised his son saying, "O my beloved son! Do not ascribe partners to Allāh. Without doubt, polytheism is the worst injustice. (14) We emphatically commanded man with regard to his parents. His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness and his weaning is after two years. (The command was) "Express gratitude to Me and to your parents. Your return will be to Me." (15) If they (your parents) force you to ascribe such partners to Me, about which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them but cordially associate with them in this world. Follow the path of him who turns to Me. Thereafter, your return will be to Me and I will

inform you of what you used to do.

THE ADVICE OF LUQMĀN عليه السلام THE WISE

WHO WAS SAYYIDINA LUQMĀN عليه السلام? Whatever has been narrated about the ancestry of Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام has been derived from the Bani Isrā'īl (the narrations are therefore Isrā'īliyāt).

"Ruhul Ma'āni" states that he was the son of Sayyidina Ayyub's عليه السلام sister, while another narration states that he was the son of Sayyidina Ayyub's عليه السلام maternal aunt. Sayyidina Luqmān's عليه السلام mother was a lady called Bā'ūra, or (according to others) Anqā. Some scholars also say that he was one of Āzar's children [which makes him Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام brother].

It is reported that he lived for a thousand years and also learnt from Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. Sayyidina Wāqidi رحمة الله عليه says that he lived in the period between Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

A difference of opinion also exists about his status. While some scholars regard him as a Prophet, others claim that he was not one. Certain scholars also say that he originated from Africa. Many maintain that he was a freed slave, while others deny this. Allāh knows best.

The following are opinions about his occupation:

He was a carpenter.

He made bedding and pillows.

He was a tailor.

He was a shepherd.

He was a judge among the Bani Isrā'īl.

After quoting the above, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that all these statements cannot be authenticated. What is certain is that Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام was a pious and wise man, who was not a Prophet. Since he was not a Prophet, he was either guided by divine inspiration or by a Prophet.

Many words of wisdom have flowed from his lips, which are quoted in books. The "Mu'atta" of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه reports that Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام was once asked about the reason for his wisdom and virtue. He replied that he attained this status by practising three things, viz.

1. *Truthfulness in speech,*
2. *Returning trusts and*
3. *Abstaining from deeds and speech that are futile.* [*"Mishkāt" p. 445*]

Allāh says, *"We certainly granted wisdom to Luqmān.."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه interprets *"wisdom"* to mean a keen intellect and understanding, while Imām Rāghib رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to an understanding the creation and the inspiration to do good deeds. Imām Rāzi رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to putting his knowledge into practice. Other commentators say that it implies that he was steadfast in knowledge and deed. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

Allāh inspired him *"to express gratitude to Allāh."* i.e. for all Allāh's bounties, especially that of wisdom. Allāh continues to say, *"Whoever will be grateful to Allāh, expresses gratitude for his own benefit."* When a person expresses gratitude to Allāh, he will be rewarded for it, while it is no favour to Allāh. Allāh says in a verse of Surah Ibrahīm, *"If you show gratitude, then I will definitely give you more, and if you are ungrateful, then indeed My punishment is severe.* [*Surah 14, verse 7*]

Allāh continues, *"As for him who is ungrateful, Allāh is certainly Independent, Most Worthy of praise."* Allāh will suffer no harm or loss if someone does not show gratitude to Him. Allāh needs nothing from His creation because He is worthy of all praise, whether people accept the fact or not.

POLYTHEISM *(SHIRK)* IS THE WORST INJUSTICE

Allāh Ta'āla then says that it is well worth recalling the time *"when Luqmān advised his son saying, 'O my beloved son! Do not ascribe partners to Allāh. Without doubt, polytheism is the worst injustice.'"* The Arabic word 'Zulm' (injustice/oppression) literally refers to placing something where it should not be. Shirk (polytheism) is the worst 'Zulm' because the perpetrator offers his worship to his false gods instead of offering it to Allāh, Who is Most Worthy of worship.

THE COMMAND TO TREAT PARENTS WELL

"We emphatically commanded man with regard to his parents." Man is supposed to treat his parents with the utmost honour and respect, tending to their every need. Man should bear in mind that he was once a weak and frail child who was unable to do anything for himself. It was then that his mother tended to his every need despite her own weakness and needs.

'His mother carried him (in her womb) *in weakness upon weakness..."* An expectant mother grows weaker with every day that she bears her child. In Surah Bani Isrā'īl [*Surah 17, verse 24*], Allāh teaches man the supplication that he should make in favour of his parents. The du'ā is: *"O my Lord! Show mercy to them as they have raised me (mercifully) when I was young."*

"and his weaning is after two years." After the ordeal of delivering the child, the parents have to tend to the nourishment of the child. Again they are faced with difficulties and expenses. While the mother exerts herself to feed and care for the child, and the father exerts himself earning a living for them, the child has only to sleep. When the child falls ill, the parents sacrifice their own comforts and sleep to put the child at rest, taking him to their bosoms in an effort to calm him.

This is not even the tip of the iceberg of hardships that parents endure for - their children in their infancy. Thereafter, the baby grows into a young child, still depend it on his parents for everything. Keeping all of this in mind, a child ought to have a burning desire to offer comfort and peace to his parents when he grows up. Man's sense of honour demands that he makes and effort to repay some of their efforts as a token of gratitude.

Of course, man cannot forget the greater gratitude which he owes to Allāh, Who has created him and has placed love and affection into his parent's hearts. It

is for this reason that Allāh commands man to, *"Express gratitude to Me and to your parents. Your return will be to Me."*

"If they (your parents) force you to ascribe such partners to Me, about which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them..." polytheism *(shirk)* has been passed on from generation to generation, each person claiming to be following his forefathers. Allāh cautions people against this blind following. A person should utilise his intelligence to determine the fallacy of polytheism *(shirk),* and should not follow the foolish trend set by others.

Although children must obey their parents, they must not obey them when they issue an instruction to contravene Allāh's command. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the creation (irrespective of who it is) must not be obeyed when their command entails disobedience to the Creator.

Although the parents will not be obeyed under such circumstances, nevertheless Allāh adds, ... *but cordially associate with them this world."* A Muslim child must always serve his/her parents even though they may be disbelievers.

"Follow the path of him who wins to Me." It is within the nature of man that he is influenced by company. Evil company has evil effects, while good company produces good effects. It is therefore necessary for a Muslim to keep good company so that s/he may be encouraged to do good.

"Thereafter, your return will be to Me and I will inform you of what you used to do." Allāh will then reward or punish people according to their deeds.

Obedience to parents has been discussed in some detail in the commentaries of verses 23 and 24 of Surah Bani Isrā'īl (*Surah 17*) and at the beginning of Surah Ankabūt [*Surah 29, verse 8*].

يَٰبُنَيَّ إِنَّهَآ إِن تَكُ مِثۡقَالَ حَبَّةٖ مِّنۡ خَرۡدَلٖ فَتَكُن فِي صَخۡرَةٍ أَوۡ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ أَوۡ فِي
ٱلۡأَرۡضِ يَأۡتِ بِهَا ٱللَّهُۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٞ ﴿١٦﴾ يَٰبُنَيَّ أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأۡمُرۡ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ
وَٱنۡهَ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ وَٱصۡبِرۡ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَصَابَكَۖ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ عَزۡمِ ٱلۡأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تُصَعِّرۡ خَدَّكَ
لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمۡشِ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مَرَحًاۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخۡتَالٖ فَخُورٖ ﴿١٨﴾ وَٱقۡصِدۡ فِي
مَشۡيِكَ وَٱغۡضُضۡ مِن صَوۡتِكَۚ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ ٱلۡأَصۡوَٰتِ لَصَوۡتُ ٱلۡحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾

(16) O my beloved son! if there has to be a deed equivalent to the weight of a mustard seed within a boulder or in the heavens or the earth, Allāh would present it. Without doubt, Allāh has knowledge of intricacies and is The Informed. (17) O my beloved son! Establish Salāh, enjoin good, forbid evil and patiently endure whatever afflicts you. Verily, this is from the most resolute of matters. (18) Do not turn your face away from people and do not walk arrogantly on earth. Verily Allāh detests every arrogant braggart. (19) Moderate your walk and lower your voice, indeed, the most abhorrent sound is the braying of a

donkey.

THE EMPHASIS ON SALĀH AND ON ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL

After stressing the importance of treating parents well, Allāh again quotes the advices of Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام. Describing Allāh's vast knowledge, he said, *"O my beloved son! If there has to be a deed equivalent to the weight of a mustard seed (which is hidden) within a boulder or in the heavens or the earth, Allāh would present it* {on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*}. *Without doubt, Allāh has knowledge of intricacies and is The Informed."* Allāh is aware of the most hidden actions and none should think that he can hide any deed from Allāh.

Advising his son further, Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام said, *"O my beloved son! Establish Salāh, enjoin good, forbid evil..."* A person should free his mind from all matters of this world and concentrate his attention in Salāh. At the same time, he should urge others to follow suit and to fulfil Allāh's commands. He must also forbid them from sinning. In doing so, a person is certain to encounter opposition, because of which Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام advised his son saying, *"and patiently endure whatever afflicts you."* The importance of patience cannot be exaggerated. Since it is also one of the most bitter deeds, Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام added, *"Verily, this is from the most resolute of matters."*

THE IMPORTANCE OF PATIENCE AND THE NEED TO BE HUMBLE IN ONE'S APPROACH

"and patiently endure whatever afflicts you." The general wording of this phrase includes every type of adversity, not only those associating with preaching. Exercising patience when afflicted by an adversity is the most difficult of all deeds, but produces the sweetest of fruits. In Surah Baqarah, Allāh declares, *"Verily Allāh is with the patient ones."*

Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام further advised his son saying, *"Do not turn your face away from people..."* In this piece of advice, Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام cautions his son against looking down on others because it occurs that people with some knowledge or wealth feel it below their dignity to associate with others.

Although Allāh granted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the highest dignity, he displayed the most humility. It is reported in Shamā'il Tirmidhi that, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم spoke to someone, he turned fully to the person, thereby denoting that his full attention was on the person and that he was not ignoring him.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never withdrew his hands after greeting someone until the person did so himself. He also never turned his attention away from someone until the person did so first. [*"Mishkāt" p. 520*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a believer *(Mu'min)* is one who lovingly associates' with others, He added that the person who does not associate lovingly with others, and with whom others do not associate in this manner, is bereft of all good.

THE ABOMINATION OF PRIDE

Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام also told his son, *"and do not walk arrogantly on earth. Verily Allāh detests every arrogant braggart."* This subject has been discussed in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, where Allāh says, *"And do not walk haughtily on earth. You can certainly not cleave the earth, nor can you reach the mountains in height."* [*Surah 17, verse 37*]

"Moderate your walk..." i.e. neither walk so fast that you present a danger to yourself and others, nor walk at a snail's pace, resembling arrogant and haughty people. Of course, if a person is ill or weak, he may walk slowly.

"..... and lower your voice, indeed, the most abhorrent sound is the braying of a donkey." Just as the braying of a donkey is jarring and unpleasant, an unnecessary loud voice produces the same effect.

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَاهِرَةً
وَبَاطِنَةً ۗ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنِيرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾
وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۚ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ
الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٢١﴾ ۞ وَمَن يُسْلِمْ وَجْهَهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ ۗ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَلَا يَحْزُنكَ
كُفْرُهُ ۚ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٢٣﴾ نُمَتِّعُهُمْ
قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ نَضْطَرُّهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

(20) Do you not see that Allāh has subjugated for you whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and has showered His apparent and concealed bounties on you? There are those people who dispute about Allāh without knowledge, guidance and without an illuminating Book. (21) When it is said to them, "Follow what Allāh has revealed," they say, "We will follow what we found our forefathers doing." Will they follow their forefathers even though Satan (Shaytān) called their forefathers to the punishment of the Blaze? (22) Whoever surrenders himself to Allāh and is sincere, has certainly clung on to a strong handhold. To Allāh will the outcome of all affairs return. (23) Let not the disbelief of the disbelievers grieve you. Their return is to Us, when We will inform them of what they did. Verily Allāh has knowledge of the secrets of the hearts. (24) We will afford them enjoyment for a while, after which We will force them into a severe punishment.

ALTHOUGH ALLĀH HAS SHOWERED MAN WITH ALL TYPES OF BOUNTIES, YET THE DISBELIEVERS BLINDLY FOLLOW THEIR FOREFATHERS

After concluding the advices of Sayyidina Luqmān عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"Do*

you not see that Allāh has subjugated for you whatever is in the heavens and the earth..." Allāh has placed all of these creation at man's service. Even the things that are not directly in man's control are of benefit to him in some way or another.

Allāh also asks whether man does not see that He has *"showered His apparent and concealed bounties on you?"* The bounties that Allāh has given to man are innumerable. Many are visible, while a great many are invisible. The greatest of all bounties is belief *(Imān)*, which is invisible, but will guarantee man's salvation in the Hereafter.

Allāh has granted man the five senses in addition to the great bounty of intellect. Allāh has also blessed him with the various organs and limbs of the body, attached to invaluable joints without which man will be stationary.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has also reported other interpretations of *"apparent and concealed bounties."* Some commentators say that *"apparent"* bounties refer to the supremacy of Islām and the Muslim conquests, while the *"concealed bounties"* denote the hidden assistance of the angels in battle. Others are of the opinion that *"apparent"* bounties are those of this world, while *"concealed bounties"* are the bounties of the Hereafter.

Others maintain that *"apparent"* bounties are the physical limbs and faculties like hearing, sight, speech, etc. They say that the *"concealed bounties"* are the inner organs and hidden faculties like intellect, perception, etc. A fourth interpretation of this is that *"apparent"* bounties are those shared by everyone, while *"concealed bounties"* are those that every person possesses exclusively in his/her personal capacity.

These bounties demand that people be grateful to the One Who conferred these on them, i.e. Allāh. They should then devote themselves only to His worship. However, *"There are those people who dispute about Allāh without knowledge, guidance and without an illuminating Book."* These people have no basis to refute belief in Allāh. The only argument they tender is that they are following their forefathers. Allāh says, *"When it is said to them, 'Follow what Allāh has revealed,' they say, 'We will follow what we found our forefathers doing.*

Allāh cautions them saying, *"Will they follow their forefathers even though* Satan *(Shaytān) called their forefathers to the punishment of the Blaze?"* Their forefathers acted in response to Satan's *(Shaytān's)* call which led them to Hell. Will these people do the same? While they have seen that their forefathers were in manifest error, they chose to fall into the same pit.

After highlighting the foolishness of the disbelievers, Allāh praises the believers (*Mu'minīn*) saying, *"Whoever surrenders himself to Allāh and is sincere* (in beliefs and deeds), *has certainly clung on to a strong handhold."* This person has held tight to the unbreakable rope of Tauhīd (*monotheism*), which will save him from the torments of the Hereafter.

"To Allāh will the outcome of all affairs return." The good and evil deeds and beliefs of people will be presented before Allāh on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh will pass judgement accordingly.

Allāh then consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Let not the*

disbelief of the disbelievers grieve you. Their return is to Us, when We will inform them of what they did. Verily Allāh has knowledge of the secrets of the hearts." The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم task was to pass the message of Tauhīd (*monotheism*) and Islām to the people. Thereafter, he was not responsible for making anyone believe. Everyone will stand before Allāh on the Day of Judgement, when the inner secrets of their hearts will become apparent and they will be judged accordingly.

Referring to the wealth and riches that the disbelievers enjoy in this world, Allāh says, *"We will afford them enjoyment for a while, after which We will force them into a severe punishment."* Their pleasures will be short-lived and will be of no use to them in the Hereafter. When they will be punished in Hell.

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ
لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (25) لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ (26) وَلَوْ أَنَّمَا
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَٰمٌ وَٱلْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَّا نَفِدَتْ
كَلِمَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ (27) مَّا خَلْقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعْثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ ۗ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ (28) أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى
ٱلَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِىٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
خَبِيرٌ (29) ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ
ٱلْكَبِيرُ (30)

(25) If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will definitely reply, "Allāh." Say, "All praise belongs to Allāh." But most of them do not know. (26) To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Undoubtedly Allāh is Independent, Worthy of all praise. (27) If all the trees on earth were pens and the ocean was supplemented by another seven oceans, Allāh's words will never be exhausted. Verily Allāh is Mighty, the Wise. (28) Your creation and resurrection is like a single soul. Without doubt Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing. (29) Do you not see that Allāh enters the night into the day, enters the day into the night and has subjugated the sun and the moon? Each one runs until an appointed term. Allāh is Informed of whatever you do. (30) This is because Allāh is the Truth and whatever you worship besides Him are false and Allāh is the Exalted, the Great.

ALLĀH'S CREATION AND HIS AUTHORITY OVER THE UNIVERSE

"If you ask them (the disbelievers) who created the heavens and the earth, they will definitely reply, 'Allāh (has created it).' *Say,* '(Once this fact is acknowledged, it

follows that) *All praise belongs to Allāh.' But most of them do not know."* Because of the effect of their environment, people are negligent of this fact and, when they are informed about it, they adamantly claim to follow in the footsteps of their ignorant forefathers.

"To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth (including those that the polytheists ascribe as partners to Him). *Undoubtedly Allāh is Independent, Worthy of all praise."* All praise can be attributed only to Him whether people admit this fact or not. Allāh does not need people to praise Him before becoming deserving of the praise.

"If all the trees on earth were pens and the ocean was supplemented by another seven oceans (to be transformed into ink), Allāh's words will never be exhausted (even after all the ink and pens are expended). Verily Allāh is Mighty, the Wise." This is so because Allāh's words are infinite and no finite entity can do justice to it.

WHAT ARE "ALLĀH'S WORDS"? Some commentators say that *"Allāh's words"* refer to His speech, which has no beginning in time. Others say that *"Allāh's words"* refers to His knowledge and ability, which cannot be put to paper. Another group of commentators maintain that *"Allāh's words"* refers to Allāh's attributes and perfection. Millions of pens and a multitude of oceans may expire, but these will never end.

Reference has been made to this in Surah Kahf, where Allāh says, *"Say, 'If the ocean was ink for the words of my Lord, the ocean would deplete before the words of my Lord can deplete, even if We supplement it with a like amount of ink.'"* [*Surah 18, verse 109*]

Allāh continues to say, *"Your creation and resurrection is like a single soul. Without doubt Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing."* For Allāh to recreate the entire mankind is as easy as creating a single being. It is therefore foolish to deny the possibility of resurrection.

"Do you not see that Allāh enters the night into the day, enters the day into the night and has subjugated the sun and the moon? Each one runs until an appointed term (without a fraction of discrepancy in its timing and orbit). Allāh is Informed of whatever you do." None but Allāh has created and maintains the solar system and the entire universe.

"This (i.e. the reason for all of this) *is because Allāh is the Truth* (His existence is true and it is true that only He can be worshipped) *and whatever you worship besides Him are false and Allāh is the Exalted, the Great."* None can be equal to Him in excellence.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱلْفُلْكَ تَجْرِى فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ بِنِعْمَتِ ٱللَّهِ لِيُرِيَكُم مِّنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٣١﴾ وَإِذَا غَشِيَهُم مَّوْجٌ كَٱلظُّلَلِ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْبَرِّ فَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَّا كُلُّ خَتَّارٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

(31) Do you not see that the ship travels on the sea by Allāh's grace so that He

may show you some of His signs? In this are definite signs for every extremely patient and grateful person. (32) When a wave covers them like a canopy, they supplicate to Allāh, having sincere belief in Him. When He rescues them to land, then a few of them tread the moderate path. It is only every extremely treacherous and grossly ungrateful person who rejects Our verses.

SHIPS TRAVEL THE OCEANS BY ALLĀH'S GRACE AND THE POLYTHEISTS SUPPLICATE EARNESTLY TO ALLAH WHEN THE WAVES CONVERGE ON THEM

"Do you not see that the ship travels on the sea by Allāh 's grace so that He may show you some of His signs?" While a small piece of iron will not float on the sea, Allāh makes iron ships weighing thousands of tons float and travel comfortably on the sea. The ships transport goods from continent to continent, some of them being propelled by the winds, which will not blow without Allāh's command. Allāh says about these phenomena, *'in this are definite signs for every extremely patient and grateful person."*

It often occurs that waters become turbulent at sea, with waves pounding ships like pieces of cork. Man is then overcome with fear and turns to Allāh for assistance. Describing the scene, Allāh says, *"When a wave covers them like a canopy, they (even* the polytheists) *supplicate to Allāh, having sincere belief in Him. When He rescues them to land, then a few of them tread the moderate path."* These few are the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, who continue to tread the path of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* after being rescued. However, the disbelievers resort to their previous ways, as Allāh mentioned in Surah Ankabūt *"But when He rescues them to land, they again begin to ascribe partners to Him."* [*Surah 29, verse 65*]

"It is only every extremely treacherous and grossly ungrateful person who rejects Our verses." Those who pledge to worship Allāh if He rescues them from the sea belie their pledge when they reach the safety of land. Like these, there are many who deny Allāh's clear signs and are ungrateful to Him for the favours He bestows on them each second.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ وَٱخْشَوْا۟ يَوْمًا لَّا يَجْزِى وَالِدٌ عَن وَلَدِهِۦ وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَن وَالِدِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿٣٣﴾

(33) O people! Fear Allāh and beware of the day when a father will be of no avail to his son, nor will a child be of any avail to his father. Verily Allāh's promise is true. So let not the life of this world beguile you, and do not allow the great deceiver to beguile you regarding Allāh.

FEAR ALLĀH, BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE HEREAFTER AND DO NOT LET SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* BEGUILE YOU

Allāh urges people to prepare for the Day of Judgement by accepting belief *(Imān)* and performing good deeds. Only this will be of any assistance on the

dreadful Day of Judgement, when *"a father will be of no avail to his son, nor will a child be of any, avail to his father."* On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* every person will be so worried about his own plight that he will not be bothered about the next person even though the person may be as close as his father or his son. None will be prepared to suffer on behalf of another.

The facts mentioned about the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* should not be taken lightly because *"Verily Allāh's promise is true.* Therefore, every person should treat the matter seriously and act accordingly.

'So let not the life of this world beguile you... "This part of the verse may refer to those who do not accept Islām for fear of losing some wealth or worldly status. It also applies to those Muslims who have made the life of this world their primary objective and concentrate all their efforts towards the world. So doing, they neglect their religious obligations and fall into all types of vice and sin.

"and do not allow the great deceiver to beguile you regarding Allāh." Satan *(Shaytān)*, in conjunction with man's carnal self, instigate him to sin and deceive him by telling him that he can miss Salāh and Zakāh, because he can always carry these out another time. They also entice him to sin with the notion that Allāh will forgive him. Allāh cautions man not to be deceived in this manner, but to be careful not to destroy his life in the Hereafter by falling for the deception.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ ٱلْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌ
مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌۢ بِأَىِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌۢ ﴿٣٤﴾

(34) Verily the knowledge of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* is only with Allāh. He sends the rains and knows what is in the wombs. A soul does not know what it will earn tomorrow and does not know which land it will die in. Undoubtedly Allāh is All Knowing, Informed.

ONLY ALLĀH POSSESSES THE KNOWLEDGE OF FIVE MATTERS

The Qur'ān asserts on numerous occasions that Only Allāh has knowledge of the un seen. Of course, He does inform some of His chosen servants about certain aspects of this knowledge when He wills.

Muslim reports that when Jibr'īl عليه السلام asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the time when Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will take place, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم submitted, "The one being asked has no more knowledge than the one asking.'

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said that there are five matters about which only Allāh has knowledge. He then recited the above verse of Surah Luqmān. [Muslim]

These five matters contained in the above verse are as follows:

1. The *"knowledge of* Judgment day *(Qiyāmah) is only with Allāh..."* i.e. only He knows when Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*

will take place.

2. Only *"He sends the rains."*

3. Only He *"knows what is in the wombs."*

4. *"A soul does not know what it will earn tomorrow"* Only Allāh knows this.

5. A soul *"does not know which land it will die in."* This knowledge is also exclusive to Allāh.

This is so because *"Undoubtedly Allāh is All Knowing, Informed."*

Nowadays people claim that, using scientific instruments, they are also able to tell when rain will fall and what baby is in the womb. They only fool themselves because their knowledge cannot be compared to Allāh's. Allāh knew these things before the existence of creation and knows the detailed contents of every womb. While scientific instruments can only tell gender after a certain period of time (then also subject to error), and need to know factors such as wind direction and moisture content in the air before predicting rainfall, Allāh always knows exactly what type of person is to be born to every mother and exactly when, where and how much rain will fall. Allāh knows every minute detail of the child, including his spiritual life and whether the rainfall will be beneficial or detrimental.

Besides the factors mentioned in the verse, there is much more that man has no knowledge about. Only Allāh possesses certain knowledge of all unseen matters.

سورة السجدة

Makkan	Surah As-Sajdah	Verses 30

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ تَنزِيلُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لَا رَيۡبَ فِيهِ مِن رَّبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ أَمۡ يَقُولُونَ ٱفۡتَرَىٰهُۚ
بَلۡ هُوَ ٱلۡحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوۡمًا مَّآ أَتَىٰهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبۡلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَهۡتَدُونَ
﴿٣﴾ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٖ ثُمَّ ٱسۡتَوَىٰ عَلَى
ٱلۡعَرۡشِۖ مَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَلِيّٖ وَلَا شَفِيعٍۚ أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤﴾

In the name of Allāh, The Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Mīm. (2) There is no doubt in this revealed Book from the Lord of the universe. (3) Or do they say that he has fabricated it? Nay! It is the truth from your Lord so that you warn a nation to whom a warner has not come before you, so that they may be rightly guided. (4) It is Allāh Who created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two in six days and then rose to the Throne. Besides Him, you have no Protecting Friend, nor any intercessor. Will you not take heed?

THE QUR'ĀN IS THE TRUTH FROM ALLĀH WHO CREATED THE HEAVENS, THE EARTH AND WHATEVER IS BETWEEN IN SIX DAYS

None but Allāh knows the meaning of the opening verse because it is from the Hurūf Muqatta'āt, as explained at the very beginning of Surah Baqarah. Allāh declares that the Qur'ān is a revelation from Him, after which He quotes the polytheists who say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fabricated the Qur'ān. Allāh replies to their objection by stating, *"Nay! It is the truth from your Lord..."* Allāh then sheds light on the objective of the Qur'ān. Allāh says that He revealed the Qur'ān *"so that you warn a nation to whom a warner has not come before you, so that they may be rightly guided."*

The *"nation"* referred to in this verse is the people of Makkah. Although none of the previous Prophets عليهم السلام came to them, they did receive the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* from others and were aware of the Prophets عليهم السلام.

They were the descendants of Sayyidina Ibrahīm and Isma'īl عليهما السلام, both of whom were Prophets عليهم السلام. They therefore received the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* from their origins, and knew that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام worshipped only One Allāh. Therefore, one cannot argue that they should be exempted from punishment because no Prophet was specifically sent to them.

Allāh says in Surah Fātir, *"A warner passed in every nation."* A warner" does not necessarily have to be a Prophet, but can be a representative of Prophet or any religious scholar who preached oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*

"It is Allāh Who created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two in six days and then rose to the Throne." The explanation of this has passed in the commentary of verse 54 of Surah A'rāf (Surah 7) and verse 59 of Surah Furqān (*Surah* 25).

"Besides Him, you have no Protecting Friend, nor any intercessor. Will you not take heed?" None can help another against Allāh's punishment, nor can anyone intercede on behalf of another without Allāh' s permission.

يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِى يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُۥٓ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿5﴾

(5) He ordains every affair from the heavens to the earth, after which every affair will ascend to Him on a day, the duration of which is a thousand years according to your count.

ALLĀH ORDAINS ALL AFFAIRS, ALL OF WHICH WILL ASCEND TO HIM ON A DAY EQUAL TO A THOUSAND YEARS

Everything that occurs in the universe takes place only by Allāh' s ordinance, according to His divine plan. All of creation and their deeds will be presented before Allāh on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, when He will pass judgement. The Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* will be equal in length to a thousand years of this world.

While the above verse mentions that the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* will span a thousand years, a verse of Surah Ma'ārij states that the duration will be fifty thousand years. When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه was questioned about this apparent discrepancy, he replied, "Allāh has mentioned these two days in His Book and He knows best about their reality. I dislike to pass a comment pertaining to Allāh's Book without knowledge."

Some commentators have mentioned that the difference in duration will be with regard to different people. To some people, the day will seem to last a thousand years, while it would appear to others that it is fifty thousand years because of the added torment they will suffer. In fact, according to a hadith, the day will be so easy for the pious believers *(Mu'minīn)* that it will seem to them as short as the time taken to perform two Rakāhs of Salāh.

ذَٰلِكَ عَٰلِمُ ٱلۡغَيۡبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿6﴾ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَحۡسَنَ كُلَّ شَيۡءٍ خَلَقَهُۥۖ
وَبَدَأَ خَلۡقَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنِ مِن طِينٖ ﴿7﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسۡلَهُۥ مِن سُلَٰلَةٖ مِّن مَّآءٖ مَّهِينٖ ﴿8﴾
ثُمَّ سَوَّىٰهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِهِۦۖ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمۡعَ وَٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرَ وَٱلۡأَفۡـِٔدَةَۚ قَلِيلٗا مَّا
تَشۡكُرُونَ ﴿9﴾ وَقَالُوٓاْ أَءِذَا ضَلَلۡنَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَءِنَّا لَفِي خَلۡقٖ جَدِيدِۭۚ بَلۡ هُم بِلِقَآءِ
رَبِّهِمۡ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿10﴾ ۞قُلۡ يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم مَّلَكُ ٱلۡمَوۡتِ ٱلَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمۡ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمۡ
تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿11﴾

(6) It is He Who has knowledge of the un seen and the seen. He is Mighty, the Most Merciful. (7) He has perfected the creation of everything and originated the creation of man from sand. (8) He has then made man's progeny from a product of lowly water. (9) He then perfected him, blew His spirit in him, and granted you ears, eyes and hearts. Little is the gratitude you show. (10) They say, "When we are lost in the earth, will we really be re-created?" The fact is that they reject the meeting with their Lord. (11) Say, "The angel of death, who is appointed over you, will claim your souls, after which you will be returned to your Lord."

THE CREATION AND PERFECTION OF MAN

In these verses, Allāh continues to describe His phenomenal attributes. Allāh says that *'It is He Who has knowledge of the un seen and the seen."* Allāh is Aware of everything that man can see and whatever he cannot see. Allāh is also aware of every event to occur in the future as well. Added to this, Allāh is also *"Mighty, the Most Merciful."*

"He has perfected the creation of everything..." According to Allāh's perfect wisdom, He has created everything in accordance to its function. Consequently, every creature carries out its designated function according to Allāh's perfect design. Therefore, even if something does not appear to be physically beautiful, it does not mean that Allāh created it imperfectly.

Allāh also *"originated the creation of man from sand."* The details of this have been given in Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verse 26*] and also appear in the concluding verses of Surah Sād [*Surah 38, verse 71*].

"He has then made man's progeny from a product of lowly water." After Allāh created Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, He made the rest of mankind reproduce via the male and female sexual act, whereby the child is born of the mother's fertilized womb, referred to above as a *"product of lowly water* (sperm)."

"He then reinvested him (by forming his limbs and organs within the womb), *blew His spirit in him, and* (fashioned you when He) *granted you ears, eyes and hearts."* Thereafter, the child is born with all the capabilities of a human being, gradually progressing through the various stages of development.

Whereas man is supposed to be grateful to Allāh for all of these bounties, Allāh declares, *"Little is the gratitude you show."* Of mankind, there are very few who truly express their gratitude to Allāh. Of these, there are even fewer who are as grateful as they ought to be.

"They say, 'When we are lost in the earth, will we really be re-created?' The fact is that they reject the meeting with their Lord." In this verse, Allāh repeats the subject matter of many other verses, highlighting the way the disbelievers rejected the belief in resurrection after death.

Allāh announces, *"Say, 'the angel of death, who is appointed over you, will claim your souls, after which you will be returned to your Lord.'"* This verse makes it clear that all will have to die, after which they will be resurrected and presented before Allāh on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh has appointed the angel of death to extract every person's soul. It will be then that the punishment of the disbelievers will begin.

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُوا۟ رُءُوسِهِمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَآ أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَٱرْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ ﴿12﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَءَاتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدَىٰهَا وَلَٰكِنْ حَقَّ ٱلْقَوْلُ مِنِّى لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿13﴾ فَذُوقُوا۟ بِمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَآ إِنَّا نَسِينَٰكُمْ وَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلْخُلْدِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿14﴾ .

(12) If only they saw the scene when the criminals will bow their heads before their Lord (saying) "O our Lord! We have seen and we have heard. Return us so that we may carry out good deeds. We are now certainly convinced." (13) If We willed, We would have granted every soul its guidance. However, the decree has issued from Me that I will surely fill Hell with a collection of man and Jinn. (14) "So taste (the punishment) because you forgot this day! We have forgotten you as well. Taste of the eternal punishment because of the deeds you perpetrated!"

THE MISERABLE PLIGHT OF THE SINNERS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*, AND THEIR REQUEST TO BE RETURNED TO THIS WORLD

The previous verses quoted the disbelievers who said, *"When we are lost in the earth, will we really be re-created?"* Now the above verses speak about these very same people when they will find themselves before Allāh on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh says, *"If only they saw the scene when the criminals will bow their heads before their Lord (saying) 'O our Lord! We have seen and we have heard. Return us so that we may carry out good deeds. We are now certainly convinced (about the truth of what the Prophets* عليهم السلام *and their successors told us).'"* Of course, then it will be too late to make amends.

Allāh says further, *"If we willed, We would have granted every soul its guidance. However, the decree has issued from Me that I will surely fill Hell with a collection of man and Jinn (who have perpetrated disbelief)."*

When Iblīs (*Satan*) had sworn that he would mislead man, Allāh had already told him then, *'I shall certainly fill Hell with you and all those who follow you."*

When 'hidayah' (guidance), is interpreted as 'pointing out the right direction,' then every person will receive this type of guidance. However, if 'hidayah' is interpreted as 'taking a person to the right destination,' then everyone is not blessed with this.

Allāh has clearly defined the path of belief *(Imān)* and the path of disbelief. Each person has been given the freedom to choose. Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"Speak the truth that comes from your Lord. Whomsoever is willing, should believe, and whoever is unwilling should remain as a disbeliever. We have surely prepared for the oppressors a Fire, the walls of which will encompass them."* [*Surah 18, verse 29*]

Of course, in His eternal knowledge, Allāh was always aware of the fact that certain people would be destined for Heaven, while others will be doomed to Hell.

The promise of being good upon returning to the world is a blatant lie, as Allāh says in Surah An'ām, *"If they were to be sent back* (to the world), *they would return to what they had been prohibited from and they truly are liars."* [*Surah 6, verse 28*]

In Surah Fātir, Allāh mentions that they will receive the following reply to their request to be returned: *"Did We not grant you sufficient age in which the one who takes heed may take heed? And did a warner not come to you? So taste* (of the punishment)! *The oppressors will not have a helper."* [*Surah 35, verse 37*]

Allāh will then tell them, *"So taste (the punishment) because you forgot this day! We have forgotten you as well. Taste of the eternal punishment because of the deeds you perpetrated!"*

إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُواْ بِهَا خَرُّواْ سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُواْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ
لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۩ ﴿15﴾ تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا
وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿16﴾ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أُخْفِىَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ
جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿17﴾ أَفَمَن كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَن كَانَ فَاسِقًا ۚ لَّا يَسْتَوُۥنَ ﴿18﴾
أَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَلَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ نُزُلًۢا بِمَا كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿19﴾
وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ فَسَقُواْ فَمَأْوَىٰهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ ۖ كُلَّمَآ أَرَادُوٓاْ أَن يَخْرُجُواْ مِنْهَآ أُعِيدُواْ فِيهَا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ
ذُوقُواْ عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ٱلَّذِى كُنتُم بِهِۦ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿20﴾ وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُم مِّنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ

ٱلْأَدْنَىٰ دُونَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن ذُكِّرَ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ
رَبِّهِۦ ثُمَّ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهَآ ۚ إِنَّا مِنَ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ مُنتَقِمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

(15) Only those people believe in Our verses who, when they are reminded about them, they fall in prostration, glorify the praises of their Lord and do not behave arrogant. (16) Their sides part from their beds, they supplicate to their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend from what We have provided for them. (17) No soul knows what pleasures are hidden for him as a reward for the deeds he carries out. (18) Can he who believes be like him who is a sinner? They can never be the same. (19) As for those who believe and do good deeds, as entertainment for them, there shall be gardens in places of rest because of the deeds they carry out. (20) As for those who are sinful, their abode shall be the Fire. Each time they attempt to emerge from it, they will be returned to it and told, "Taste of the punishment of the Fire which you used to deny." (21) We shall definitely let them taste the closer punishment before the greater punishment so that they may return. (22) Who is more unjust than he who is reminded of the verses of his Lord and then turns away from them? We will certainly exact retribution from the criminals.

HEAVEN FOR THE BELIEVERS AND HELL FOR THE DISBELIEVERS

Describing the traits of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, Allāh says, *"Only those people believe in Our verses who, when they are reminded about them, they fall in prostration, glorify the praises of their Lord do not behave arrogantly."* These are the people who truly heed the advice given to them by Allāh.

Further describing them, Allāh says, *"Their sides part from their beds, they supplicate to their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend from what We have provided for them."* This verse praises those who perform Tahajjud Salāh. They sleep only a short while at nights, after which they separate from their beds to offer their devotions to Allāh. They pray fervently to Allāh, hoping for His favours and fearing retribution for their shortcomings.

Fear and hope form an integral part of a Muslim's life so that he always carries out good deeds (anticipating rewards from Allāh) and abstains from evil (fearing the punishment for it). The person who has no fear for Allāh will succumb to sin and will not be inclined to perform good deeds.

Only performance of Tahajjud is mentioned in this verse because it is. obvious that the person who is particular about Tahajjud will be particular about the other Salāh as well.

In addition to the above, Allāh mentions that these pious believers *(Mu'minīn)* also spend from the wealth that Allāh has given them. The general implication of these words includes Zakāh as well as optional charity, be it little or a great deal. Spending in charity does not mean that a person has to be wealthy because a poor person can also spend according to his means, even though the sum may be small. It has been reported that certain poor Sahābah رضى الله عنهم specifically took employment to carry out menial tasks so that they could

spend the accrued funds in charity.

THE VIRTUE OF TAHAJJUD SALĀH

As already mentioned, the verse *"Their sides part from their beds..."* refers to the performance of the Tahajjud Salāh. This is corroborated by a hadith in which Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضى الله عنه narrates that, on a journey, he once asked The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to inform him of a deed which would allow him to enter Heaven and to remain distant from Hell.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "You have asked a great question, which, in reality, is not really very difficult because Allāh makes anything easy for whoever he wills. (The deed is that) you worship Allāh without ascribing partners to Him, establish Salāh, pay Zakāh, fast in Ramadhān and perform the Hajj of Allāh' s house. Should I not inform you of the doors of good?" Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم proceeded to enumerate the following:

Fasting is a shield (which protects one from the attacks of Satan *(Shaytān)* and one's carnal passions).

Charity extinguishes sins (i.e. it protects one from the Fire of Hell).

Performing Salāh during the middle of the night is the special sign of Allāh's pious bondsmen.

After mentioning this third point, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"Their sides part from their beds, they supplicate to their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend from what We have provided for them."*

Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم continued to say, "Shall I not inform you of the root of Allāh's commands and the pillar of it?" When Sayyidina Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه asked to be enlightened, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The root of Allāh's commands is obedience, the pillar is Salāh, and the pinnacle is Jihād. Should I not inform you of the source of all this (whereby all will be practicable)?" When Sayyidina Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه asked to be informed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم held his tongue saying, "Control this and secure salvation for yourself."

Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضى الله عنه then asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Will we be taken to task for the things we say?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "O Mu'ādh! It is strange that you should ask such a question! People will be flung headlong into Hell solely on account of the things they say. You are safe as long as you remain silent. When you speak, your speech may be a cause for you to be rewarded or punished." [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

"Mishkāt" p. 14 also corroborates the fact that *"Their sides part from their beds..."* refers to those who perform Tahajjud. The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has reported from Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه that the verse refers to the Ansār. They used to attend the Maghrib Salāh and not return home until they had also performed the Isha behind the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He has also reported that the verse refers to all those Sahābah رضى الله عنهم who continued to perform Salāh between Maghrib and Isha Salāh.

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه and

Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضی الله عنه have all mentioned that the verse praises those people who perform the Isha and Fajr Salāh with Jamā'ah (in congregation). [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 500*]

None of the above interpretations contradict each other because the verse may denote all of them simultaneously. When a person is able to part from his bed for the optional Tahajjud Salāh, he will certainly be able to do so for Fajr Salāh, which is obligatory. Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه mentioned that he prefers to perform the Fajr Salāh with Jamā'ah (*Congregation*) rather than stand in Tahajjud Salāh the entire night through. [*"Mishkāt"*]

Sayyidah Asmā bint Yazīd رضی الله عنها reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that people will all be gathered together before Allāh on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. An announcement will then be made with the words, "Where are those who parted their sides from their beds?" Thereupon a small group of people will arise and enter Heaven without reckoning. Thereafter reckoning will commence for the rest of the people. [*"Mishkāt" p. 487*]

Allāh makes a concise mention of the bounties of Heaven when he says, *"No soul knows what pleasures are hidden for him as a reward for the deeds he carries out."*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Allāh says, 'I have prepared for My bondsmen such pleasures in Heaven, which his eyes have never seen, his ears have never heard of, and which have never crossed his mind." Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه then added, "If you wish, you may recite the verse, *'No soul knows what pleasures are hidden for him as a reward for the deeds he carries out'.*" [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 704*]

In reality, no bounty of Heaven can be described. The description of Heaven given in the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth cannot adequately depict the pleasures of Heaven. When people reach Heaven, they will find much more than what they were promised in the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم. These pleasures cannot be perceived in this world.

Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqās رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "If a minute article of Heaven, small enough to be lifted by a fingernail, was brought into this world, everything between the heavens and the earth would be beautified by it. If a person from Heaven was to peek into this world, the illumination from a single bangle he wears will eliminate the radiance of the sun just as the sun eliminates the radiance of the stars." [*"Mishkāt"*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه narrates that nothing of this world shall be found in Heaven. The only similarity between the things of Heaven and those in this world will be in name and appearance. This means that the gold, silver, silk, fruit, etc of Heaven will be vastly superior to their namesakes of this world.

Note: In praise of His pious bondsmen Allāh says, *"and they are not arrogant."* Pride and arrogance causes one to think highly of oneself, to look down on others, and to seek fame. One then begins to engage in acts of worship so that people laud and praise one. Pride and ostentation destroy the rewards of all good deeds, causing one to be subjected to punishment. Allāh's bondsmen should steer clear of

pride and duly fulfil all the obligations stipulated by the Shari'ah, be these optional or obligatory.

A BELIEVER *(MU'MIN)* AND A SINNER CAN NEVER BE THE SAME

Further praising the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, Allāh says, *"Can he who believes be like him who is a sinner?"* Allāh then replies when he says, *"They can never be the same."*

Describing the rewards of these believers *(Mu'minīn)*, Allāh says, *"As for those who believe and do good deeds, as entertainment for them, there shall be gardens in places of rest because of the deeds they carry out."*

Allāh then projects the opposite side of the picture when He says, *"As for those who are sinful, their abode shall be the Fire. Each time they attempt to emerge from it, they are returned to it and are told, 'Taste the punishment of the Fire which you used to deny. Therefore, how can people be the same when they are destined to experience such a diverse consequences?"*

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes that the verse *"Can he who believes be like him who is a sinner?"* was revealed with reference to Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه and a polytheist called Walīd bin Uqba bin Abi Mu'īt. When an altercation erupted between the two, Walīd said to Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه, "Be silent! You are a mere child. I speak better than you, can throw a spear more accurately than you, and am more courageous. 'In reply to this, Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه said, "You should be silent! You are a sinner!" It was then that the above verse was revealed.

"We shall definitely let them taste of the closer (worldly) *punishment before the greater punishment* (in the Hereafter) *so that they may return."* The following two interpretations of this verse have been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه:

- *The worldly punishment mentioned in this verse refers to sever drought that crippled the people of Makkah..*
- *This punishment refers to defeat of the Makkan Polytheists at the battle of Badr and the death of many of their leaders on this occasion.*

The above two interpretations will apply if it is assumed that *"them"* refers to the polytheists of Makkah. However, it will also be correct to assume that the verse applies equally to every disbeliever in every era. They will therefore be afflicted with various calamities and diseases as a punishment in this very world. This interpretation has been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه. Allāh afflicts them with these adversities so that they may take heed and sense the need to mend their ways and to become Muslims. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 21 Pgs. 134, 135*]

Allāh states further, *"Who is more unjust than he who is reminded of the verses of his Lord and then turns away from them? We will certainly extract revenge from the criminals."* In this verse, Allāh makes it clear that those who deny His verses are unjust and oppressive. The verse also consoles the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم

because it states that Allāh will take the disbelievers to task for their misdemeanours.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that while an earlier verse of the Surah spoke about those who prostrate when they hear Allāh's verses, this verse discusses the opposite side of the coin and condemns those who turn away in aversion when they hear Allāh's verses being recited.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ فَلَا تَكُن فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّن لِّقَآئِهِۦ ۖ وَجَعَلْنَـٰهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا۟ ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا
يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ
﴿٢٥﴾

(23) Undoubtedly, We gave the Book to Mūsa, so never be in doubt about receiving it. And We made it a means of guidance for the Bani Isrā'īl. (24) We made leaders from them, who guided under Our command when they were patient and were convinced about Our verses. (25) Indeed, only your Lord shall decide between them on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) concerning the matters in which they differed.

ALLĀH WILL DECIDE THE MATTERS ABOUT WHICH PEOPLE DIFFER

Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, We gave the Book to Mūsa, so never be in doubt about receiving it."* Just as Allāh revealed the Torah to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, He revealed the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh therefore urges the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never to doubt the fact that these divine scriptures are really from Allāh. The verse also alludes to the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should never be despondent when people harass him because they did the same to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, but he persevered and withstood all opposition. Just as the Torah was Allāh Book, so too is the Qur'ān.

Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has interpreted the verse to mean that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should never doubt the difficulties which Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام endured.

"And We made it (the Torah) *a means of guidance for the Bani Isrā'īl."* In the same way, the Qur'ān is a means of guidance for the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"We made leaders from them (the Bani Isrā'īl), *who guided under Our command when they were patient and were convinced about Our verses."* This verse denotes that patience is of paramount importance when one is a leader and a guide of others. The conviction that these leaders had in Allāh' s verses made them resolute and granted them fortitude in their efforts of propagation. Certain commentators mention that these *"leaders"* were the Prophets عليهم السلام, while others maintain

that they also included those followers of these Prophets عليهم السلام who propagated the teachings of their Prophets.

The second interpretation seems more appropriate because Allāh adds, *"and were convinced about Our verses."* Since the Prophets عليهم السلام were always convinced about Allāh's verses, the addition would be redundant if applied to them. The verse therefore applies to all propagators of religion.

'Indeed, only your Lord shall decide between them on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) concerning the matters in which they differed." The result of this decision will be that the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will be entered into Heaven, while the disbelievers will be condemned to Hell. The verse also consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because it tells him that Allāh will deal with his opponents on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah).*

أَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ يَمْشُونَ فِى مَسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ ۖ أَفَلَا يَسْمَعُونَ (26) أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا نَسُوقُ ٱلْمَآءَ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلْجُرُزِ فَنُخْرِجُ بِهِۦ زَرْعًا تَأْكُلُ مِنْهُ أَنْعَٰمُهُمْ وَأَنفُسُهُمْ ۖ أَفَلَا يُبْصِرُونَ (27)

(26) Have they not been guided by the fact that We destroyed so many generations before them? They even walk in their settlements. There are certainly many signs in this. Do they not listen? (27) Do they not see that We dispatch water to arid land, thereby extracting plants from which your animals and you eat? Do they not see?

LEARNING LESSONS FROM THE PREVIOUSLY DESTROYED NATIONS AND ALLĀH'S BOUNTY IN SENDING RAIN TO IRRIGATE WATERLESS LAND

Those people who denied the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even denied the warnings of pending punishment. Referring to such people, Allāh asks, *"Have they not been guided by the fact that We destroyed so many generations before them?"*

Not only did the polytheists of Makkah hear the historical accounts of the destroyed nations, but they even witnessed the ruins of their once thriving cities when they travelled for trade to Shām *(Syria)*. With reference to this Allāh says, *"They even walk in* (the ruins of) *their settlements. There are certainly many signs in this. Do they not listen?"*

Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Many were the towns that We destroyed when they were oppressive. They now lie collapsed upon their roof's, and many are the disused wells and the fortresses that were once well built."* [*Surah 22, verse 45*]

Allāh then makes reference to those who deny that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will occur. He asks, *"Do they not see that We dispatch water to arid land, thereby extracting plants from which your animals and you eat? Do they not see (that Allāh can resurrect man in the same way)?"*

Allāh says in Surah Rūm, *"So look at the signs of Allāh 's mercy and how He revives the earth after its death. Undoubtedly, He gives life to the dead and He has power over all things."* [*Surah 30, verse 50*]

(28) They say, "When will this decision take place if you are truthful?" (29) Say, "On the day of the decision, the faith of the disbelievers will be of no avail to them, neither will they be granted respite." (30) So turn away from them and wait. They are also waiting.

THE FAITH OF THE DISBELIEVERS WILL BE USELESS TO THEM ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

When the disbelievers are informed about Allāh's judgement on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, they mockingly say, *"When will this decision take place if you are truthful?"* They ask to be informed about the precise date of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh tells them not to be hasty in the matter because Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will certainly dawn, when they will not be able to escape Allāh's punishment. The fact that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*has not yet dawned does not mean that it will not occur.

In fact they will be in such a forlorn state on that day that Allāh says, *"Say, 'On the day of the decision, the faith of the disbelievers will be of no avail to them, neither will they be granted respite* (if they were to beg for it)".

"So turn away from them..." They will have to face the disastrous consequences of their disbelief because they refuse to yield to the truth.

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"and wait. They are also waiting."* Allāh bids the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to patiently await Allāh's assistance just as the disbelievers await Allāh's punishment.

سورة الاحزاب

Madinan	Surah Al-Ahzāb	Verses 73

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اتَّقِ اللّٰهَ وَلَا تُطِعِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ وَالْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿۱﴾ وَّاتَّبِعْ مَا يُوْحٰٓى اِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرًا ﴿۲﴾ وَّتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ۗ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿۳﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Fear Allāh and do not follow the disbelievers and the hypocrites. Undoubtedly Allāh is ever the All Knowing, the Wise. (2) Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord. Allāh is Ever Informed about what you do. (3) Rely only on Allāh. Allāh is sufficient as a Helper.

FEAR ALLĀH AND RELY ONLY ON HIM WITHOUT FOLLOWING THE DISBELIEVERS AND HYPOCRITES

The Arabic word "Ahzāb" is the plural of "hizb," which means a 'group' or 'party.' In the 5th year after the Hijrah (*migration*), the Quraysh of Makkah and numerous other tribes converged on Madinah in opposition to the Muslims. The ensuing battle was consequently named the battle of Ahzāb because of the numerous groups gathered there. The battle is also referred to as the battle of the trench because the Muslims had dug a trench around Madinah to defend the town.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that Surah Ahzāb was revealed when certain polytheists like Walīd bin Mughiera and Shayba bin Rabī told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they would give him half of their wealth if he were to abandon his message. The Jews and hypocrites of Madinah has also threatened to kill the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم if he did not forsake his message. It was on this occasion that the Surah was revealed.

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Fear Allāh and do not follow the disbelievers and the hypocrites. Undoubtedly Allāh is ever the All Knowing, the Wise. Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord. Allāh is Ever Informed of what you do. Rely only on Allāh. Allāh is*

sufficient as a Helper."

Allāh is well aware of the threats and bribes of the disbelievers, and permits these to take place so that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم can grow more resolute in his mission. This would encourage him to press on with greater fervour and reliance on Allāh, regardless of their harassment.

مَّا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَزْوَاجَكُمُ اللَّائِي تُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْهُنَّ
أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَاءَكُمْ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ قَوْلُكُم بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَقُولُ الْحَقَّ
وَهُوَ يَهْدِي السَّبِيلَ (4) ادْعُوهُمْ لِآبَائِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِندَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوا
آبَاءَهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَمَوَالِيكُمْ ۚ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا أَخْطَأْتُم
بِهِ وَلَٰكِن مَّا تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا (5)

(4) Allāh has not placed two hearts within any man's chest, nor has He made your wives, with whom you practice "Zihār," your mothers. Allāh has also not made your adopted sons your own sons. This is merely a statement from your lips. Allāh speaks the truth and only He guides to the straight path. (5) Call them by their fathers. This is more just in the sight of your Lord. If you do not know their fathers, then they are your brothers in religion and your friends. There shall be no blame on you with regard to the errors you make, but only for what your hearts purposely intend. Allāh is ever the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

AN ACCOUNT OF A PERSON, WHO CLAINED HAVING TWO HEARTS.

"Allāh has not placed two hearts within any man's chest..." Allama Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has written (*v. 14 p. 116*) that a person by the name of Jamīl bin Ma'mar Fahri was renowned for his intelligence and outstanding memory. People claimed that he possessed two hearts, and he also claimed the same, adding that his intellectual perception was superior to that of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

It transpired that he also participated in the battle of Badr. When the polytheists were defeated at Badr, Abu Sufyān inquired from Jamīl about the result of the battle. He replied that the Makkans were conquered. Abu Sufyān then asked him why his one sandal was in his hand while the other was on his foot. He replied that he thought the sandal was on his foot. It was then that people realised that he was not really as intelligent as they thought.

THE DEFINITION OF ZIHĀR

The practice of 'Zihār' was common among the early Arabs. Zihār meant that they used to tell their wives, "You are like my mother's back to me." By saying this, they intended to state that their wives were perpetually forbidden for them to marry, just as their mothers were. If a Muslim has to say the same today,

he will have to pay an expiation, the details of which are mentioned in the commentary of the opening verses of Surah Mujādalah (*Surah 58*).

Refuting the belief that a statement like the above could forbid a person's wife perpetually, Allāh says that He has not *"made your wives, with whom you practice 'Zihār,' your mothers."* Therefore, if any person practices Zihār, his wife will not be forbidden to him as his mother is, but he may still regard her as his wife after paying the compensation due.

ADOPTED CHILDREN

Another common practice among the early Arabs was that they regarded their adopted sons as their own. They would accord the same share of inheritance to the adopted child as they would give to their own children. They also believed that it was Harām (*unlawful*) for the adoptive father to marry the adopted son's wife after his death or after a divorce. People considered the adopted son to be the real son of the adoptive father, referring to him as his son.

Refuting this false notion, Allāh declares, *"Allāh has also not made your adopted sons your own sons. This is merely a statement from your lips. Allāh speaks the truth and only he guides to the straight path (by declaring the fact that an adopted child cannot be regarded as a real child because s/he is not really so)."*

Guiding people further in the matter, Allāh says, *"Call them* (the adopted children) *by* (the names of) *their* (biological) *fathers. This is more just in the sight of your Lord. If you do not know their* (real) *fathers, then they are your brothers in religion and your friends."* Therefore, if a person finds a child without knowledge of his real father, and then adopts him, he should address him as "My brother" or "My friend." The word "mawla" (translated above as *'friends"*) has several meanings. One of these is also 'nephew.'

"There shall be no blame on you with regard to the errors you make, but only for what your hearts purposely intend." If a person erroneously referred to his adopted son as his own, he will not be sinful for this slip of the tongue. However, if he purposely intends to contravene Allāh' s command, he will he punished for it. However, *"Allāh is ever the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."* Therefore, there is always scope for repentance.

CERTAIN PERTINENT RULINGS

Ruling: An adopted child will still be related to his/her biological parents and other relatives. His/her relation with these relatives should be maintained and should not be severed.

Ruling: Since the Qur'ān explicitly mentions that the adopted child is not a real child, the child will have no share in the estate of the deceased adoptive parents. The rightful heirs have been stipulated by the Shari'ah. Of course, the adoptive parents are allowed to make a bequest in favour of the adopted child, but this should not exceed a third of the estate.

Ruling: Since the adopted child is not a real child, the adoptive parents have to implement the laws of Hijāb if the child is not related to them in any other way. The laws of Hijāb (*veil*) will therefore not apply to a woman who

adopts her sister's son or a man who adopts his brother's daughter. This is so because these people are already closely related (Mahram). If the adopted male child is related only to the adoptive father, the adoptive mother will be regarded as a non-Mahram, therefore necessitating that he (the child) does not see her after he matures. The same will apply if the adopted daughter is only related to the adoptive mother and not to the father.

Ruling: A person's adopted son may marry the biological daughter of his adoptive parents if they are not Mahram to each other by any other relation.

Ruling: A person can marry the widowed or divorced wife of his adopted son if there are no other factors to outlaw the marriage. The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم adopted son, Sayyidah Zaid bin Hāritha رضى الله عنه, married the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم cousin, Sayyidina Zainab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنه. When the couple were divorced, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married her.

When the ignorant Arabs objected to this marriage, Allāh rebutted their objection saying, *"Allāh has also not made your adopted sons your own sons..."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that they (the Sahabah) always referred to Sayyidina Zaid bin Hāritha رضى الله عنه as Zaid bin (the son of) Muhammad. However, they stopped doing so when Allāh revealed the verse, *"Allāh has also not made your adopted sons your own sons........."*

Ruling: Although it is permissible to call other people's children "My son" or "My daughter," it is best not to do so.

Ruling: Just as it is impermissible to call another person's child your own, it is not permissible for one to refer to another person as his/her father. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Heaven is forbidden for the person who refers to another as his father, knowing that the person is not his father. [Bukhari]

Ruling: If an unmarried woman conceives a child because of adultery, and then married someone other than the child's biological father, it will be Harām for her to claim that the child is her legal husband's child. It is also Harām (*unlawful*) for a man to deny being the father of his own child.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh disassociates Himself from the woman who includes a child within a family that does not belong to it. Allāh will never admit her into His Heaven. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also added that Allāh will distance a person from His mercy who denied being the father of his child while looking at the child. On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, Allāh will disgrace such a man in the presence of all mankind. [*Abu Dawūd*]

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ ۗ وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ إِلَّا أَن تَفْعَلُوا إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَائِكُم مَّعْرُوفًا ۚ كَانَ ذَٰلِكَ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَسْطُورًا ﴿6﴾

(6) The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has a greater relationship with the believers than even their own selves, and his wives are their mothers. In Allāh's Book, relatives are closer to each other than the believers and the immigrants, unless you wish to do a good turn to your friends. This has been documented in the Book.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم HAS A GREATER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BELIEVERS *(MU'MINĪN)* THAN THEY HAVE WITH THEMSELVES, AND HIS WIVES ARE THEIR MOTHERS

The above verse contains four themes. The first is expressed by the words, "The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has a greater relationship with the believers than even their own selves... ". One of the interpretations of this verse is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has more love and affection for every Mu'min than he may have for their his/her own self. Much of this has been discussed in the commentary of verse 127 of Surah Taubah (*Surah* 9), where Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly a messenger from yourselves has come to you. The difficulties that afflict you are very distressing to him. He is anxious for you and extremely forgiving and merciful unto the believers."*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم supplicated to Allāh saying, "O Allāh! I have a request to make to You, which I believe You will surely grant. I am but a human. Therefore, if I have ever hurt any believer, swore him, cursed him or lashed him, then convert this into a mercy for him and a means of purification, through which he may attain proximity to You on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*."

THE UNIVERSAL COMPASSION OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrates that whenever a person in debt passed away, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would ask whether the deceased had made any arrangements for the debt to be settled. When a positive reply was received, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performed the Janāza Salāh (*Funeral prayer*). However, if it were' determined that the deceased had not arranged for the debts to be settled, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would not perform the Janāza Salāh (*Funeral prayer*). This was to illustrate the evil of not settling debts. However, when Allāh allowed the Muslims to conquer other territories (and wealth was accessible), the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed the Muslims thus: "I have "a greater relationship with the believers than even their own selves...". Therefore, if any believer *(Mu'min)* dies without settling his/her debt, then I shall assume the responsibility for settling it. Whatever wealth they leave behind will become the property of their heirs.' [*Muslim v. 2 p. 324*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم desired that no believer *(Mu'min)* should never suffer any difficulty in this world or in the Hereafter. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "My example and yours is like a person who lit a fire. When it began to light all around him, moths began to fall into the fire. He tries to prevent them from flying into the

fire, but they overcome him and continue to fall in it. This is my example. I am saving you from falling into the fire of Hell by grabbing hold of your waists. However, you are overcoming me and falling in it." [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

However, because of their infatuation with this world and falling prey to their whims, people are flocking to the fire of Hell. In fact, the concern of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for his Ummah is so great that he will also intercede for his Ummah on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that (although the du'ā *(supplication)* of every Holy Prophet عليه السلام is accepted by Allāh), they were all granted one special du'ā *(supplication)*, the acceptance of which was guaranteed to a greater extent. While all the other Prophets عليهم السلام made this du'ā *(supplication)* in this world, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reserved his du'ā *(supplication)* for the Hereafter, when he will use it to intercede on behalf of his Ummah (*followers*). It will therefore benefit every member of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Ummah (*followers*), on condition that they never perpetrated polytheism *(shirk)*. [*Muslim*]

HONOUR AND RESPECT FOR THE WIVES OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Allāh also says that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives *"are their mothers." It* is therefore incumbent on every believer (*Mu'min*) to honour and revere the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives. Verse 53 of this Surah makes it clear that no person may marry the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives after his demise.

However, it was still necessary that every member of the Ummah observed the laws of Hijāb (*veil*) with regard to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives. Verse 53 of this Surah makes it clear that they should be asked for something only from behind a curtain.

DISTRIBUTION OF LEGACIES ACCORDING TO THE STIPULATED LAWS OF INHERITANCE

The third theme discussed in this verse is contained in the words, *'in Allāh's Book, relatives are closer to each other than the believers and the immigrants..."* When the Makkan Muslims immigrated to Madinah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fostered ties of brother hood between every Muhājir (immigrant) and an Ansār from Madinah. These ties were so strong that a "brother" from this type of bond even shared in the inheritance of his deceased 'brother.' The above verse and the concluding verse of Surah Anfāl abrogated this practice, as a result of which people shared only in the inheritance of their just heirs.

Allāh then adds the fourth theme when He says, *"unless you wish to do a good turn to your friends."* This part of the verse informs Muslims that although they cannot grant a share of the inheritance to their friends and other relatives, they may financially assist them in other ways. In fact, it is highly commendable that they do so.

"This has been documented in the Book." Certain commentators have mentioned that *"the Book"* refers to the Lowhul Mahfūdh (*protected tablet*). This means that the abrogation of inheritance on the basis of migratory brothers has

been ordained in the Lowhul Mahfūdh (*protected tablet*). The only law still standing is to grant stipulated shares of the estate to stipulated heirs.

Other commentators have stated that *"the Book"* refers to the laws of inheritance, while another group of commentators is of the opinion that it refers specifically to this verse. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has mentioned that it refers to Allāh's divine decree and ordinance.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَمِنكَ وَمِن نُّوحٍ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٧﴾ لِّيَسْأَلَ الصَّادِقِينَ عَن صِدْقِهِمْ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٨﴾

(7)(Call to mind the time) when We took the covenant from the Holy Prophets; from you, Nūh, Ibrahīm, Mūsa and Isā, the son of Maryam. We took a solemn covenant from them all... (8) ... so that He may ask the truthful about their truthfulness. Allāh has prepared a painful doom for the disbelievers.

THE COVENANT TAKEN FROM THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام

Allāh Ta'Aāla calls man attention to the time *"when We took the covenant from the Holy Prophets; from you, Nūh, Ibrahīm, Mūsa and Isā, the son of Maryam."* Although the covenant was taken from all the Prophets عليهم السلام, the above personalities are mentioned because they were especially eminent and all had their own Shari'ahs.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been mentioned first because he was created before all the others. In support of this, he quotes narration from "Kitābul MukhTāra" by Sayyidina Dhiyā'ud dīn Maqdasi رحمة الله عليه. The narration quotes the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying that Allāh began the creation by creating him, even though he was sent as the last of the Holy Prophet. In another narration, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that he was the first to be created and the last to be sent as a Prophet. [*Khasā'isul Kubra by Allama Suyuti* رحمة الله عليه]

Another reason why the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is mentioned first is that he was the first to be made a Prophet. In support of this statement, Allama Suyuti رحمة الله عليه has reported many Ahadīth.

"Mishkāt" reports a hadith from Tirmidhi in which the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he became Prophet. In reply, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I was a Prophet when Ādam was still between soul and body."

A hadith reported by Sayyidina Irbādh bin Sāriya رضى الله عنه quotes the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying that he was made the seal of the Prophets when Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was still in the form of clay.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 21 p. 154*) writes that the covenant taken

from the Prophets عليهم السلام dealt with fulfilling the duty of propagating the message, the Shari'ah, and to call people to the true religion.

"Mishkāt" (p. 24) contains a hadith in which Sayyidina Ubay bin Ka'b رضى الله عنه states that Allāh took this covenant from the Prophets عليهم السلام on the same day that He took the pledge of 'Mist' from mankind. Verse 81 of Surah Al Imrān (Surah 3) contains further details about this covenant.

"We took a solemn covenant from them all..." While some commentators say that this verse reiterates the previous one, others are of the opinion that the covenant was taken on oath a second time. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

"......so that He may ask the truthful about their truthfulness." This verse means that, on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, the Prophets عليهم السلام will be asked whether they fulfilled the conditions of the covenant.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "On the Day of Judgement, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام will be summoned and asked whether he had propagated the message. He will reply in the affirmative after which, his nation will be asked whether he had brought the message to them. They will deny it, saying that no warner had come to them. Then Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام will be asked as to who will recommend his word, he will reply, "Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah." After saying this the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed his Ummah saying, "Thereafter you will be summoned and you will confirm his word saying that most assuredly Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام had conveyed the message and propagated the religion.

From narrations in the "Musnad" of Imām Ahmad رحمة الله عليه and other books it becomes evident that besides the people of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, the nations of other Holy Prophets عليهم السلام will also reject and say that their Holy Prophet did not convey the message to them. These Prophets عليهم السلام will also be asked whether they had fulfilled their duty. Upon replying in the affirmative, they will be requested to bring forth a witness. They will summon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah for this task. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah will then be asked to comment on this situation. In reply they will say that they confirm the word of the Holy Prophets. They will further be questioned as to how they possessed knowledge concerning this matter. In response they will say, "Our Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed us that all the Holy Prophets propagated the message to their respective nations." (*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 1 p. 144*)

The Prophets عليهم السلام will be questioned in the presence of their nations so that their nations may be witness to their truthfulness. With reference to this, Allāh says in the concluding verse of Surah Mā'idah, *"Allāh will say, 'This is the day when the truth of the truthful shall profit them."* [*Surah 5, verse 119*]

Allāh continues to say, *"Allāh has prepared a painful doom for the disbelievers."* Allāh also says in Surah Zumar, *"Who can be more unjust than he who lies about Allāh, and falsifies the truth when it comes to him? Is there no abode for the disbelievers in Hell?"* [*Surah 39, verse 32*]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَآءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا

وَجُنُودًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٩﴾ إِذْ جَاءُوكُم مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ وَتَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ الظُّنُونَا ﴿١٠﴾ هُنَالِكَ ابْتُلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزُلْزِلُوا زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا ﴿١١﴾

(9) O you who believe! Call Allāh's favour to mind when the armies approached you, against which We dispatched a wind and troops that you could not see. Allāh is Watchful over what you do. (10) When they approached you from above you and from beneath you. And when eyes were bewildered, hearts reached the throats and you harboured various thoughts about Allāh. (11) On that occasion, the believers were put to the test and violently shaken.

ALLĀH'S ASSISTANCE TO THE BELIEVERS *(MU'MINĪN)* DURING THE BATTLE OF AHZĀB AND THE MISERABLE STATE OF THE DISBELIEVERS

The battle of Ahzāb, also known as the battle of the trench (Khandaq), was fought in the 5th year after the Hijrah (*migration*). One would recall that the Jews lived in Madinah long before the arrival of two Arab tribes by the name of the Aws and the Khazraj. The Jews informed them that the final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will soon arrive in Madinah. Therefore, when some Madinites met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم during the Hajj, they accepted Islām and brought the message home to their tribes. Gradually, they all became Muslims.

However, the Jews still refused to accept the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a Prophet despite being convinced of it. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah. H signed a peace accord with the three Jewish tribes living there at the time, viz. The Banu Qurayzah, Banu Nadhīr and Banu Qaynuqa.

It once transpired that the Banu Nadhīr summoned the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to come to their settlement to resolve the murder of two persons. However, they plotted to assassinate the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by appointing someone to drop a heavy boulder on him, thereby violating the peace treaty Allāh informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about their sinister plot, after which he hastily returned home. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then sent a message with Sayyidina Muhammad bin Muslima رضى الله عنه to the Banu Nadhīr, commanding them to leave Madinah.

When the Jews received the message, the Hypocrites bade them to resist the command and promised them their support. Consequently, the Jews informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they would not leave Madinah. Appointing Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umm Maktūm رضى الله عنه as his deputy, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left with the Sahābah رضى الله عنهمfor the Jewish settlement outside Madinah. By then the Jews had locked themselves within their fortress.

The hypocrites again pledged their support for the Jews by telling them that they would assist them to resist the Muslims. They even added that they would leave Madinah with the Jews if the Jews were ever banished. The Jews waited several days for the promised aid, but received none. They were eventually

forced to surrender to the Muslim army. They sent a message to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entreating him to allow them to leave Madinah without killing them. They also requested that he permit them to take their weapons with them together with whatever possessions they could load on their camels.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم permitted them to leave within three days. They then left Madinah. Most of them settled in Khaybar while others preferred to settle in Shām (*Syria*). [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" v. 4 p. 75*]

This epic has been narrated as an introduction to the battle of Ahzāb. A detailed account of this incident will be mentioned in the commentary of Surah Hashr (*Surah 59),* Insha Allāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم distributed the remaining possessions as booty to the Muslim army. This incident took place in the 4th year after the Hijrah.

A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF AHZĀB

After being banished from Madinah, the Jews still attempted to harass the Muslims. Their leader arrived in Makkah and incited the polytheists to fight against the Muslims, pledging their assistance. When the polytheists asked the Jews whether their religion {of polytheism *(shirk)*} was better than that of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Jews insolently attested that the polytheism *(shirk)* of the polytheists was better then the oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم preached.

The Quraysh were extremely pleased to hear this and pledged their assistance to the Jews. Thereafter, the Jewish leader secured the support of the Ghitfān tribe and many other neighbouring tribes as well.

DIGGING A TRENCH TO SECURE MADINAH

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received intelligence about the plans of the disbelievers, he called the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم to a meeting. It was then that Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه proposed that they dig a trench to halt the approach of the enemy. The proposal was accepted and the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم set to work. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself participated in the digging even though it was in winter.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم designated the boundaries of the trench and appointed group of ten men to dig 40 hand lengths. (Some scholars have mentioned that the trench was 3½ miles in length). Since Sayyidina Salmān رضى الله عنه was strong and healthy, the Muhājirīn (*emigrants*) and the Ansār wanted him to join their ranks in digging. Eventually the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that Sayyidina Salmān رضى الله عنه was neither a Muhaajir (*emigrant*), nor an Ansār, but a member of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم own family.

When the 12000 strong disbelievers army altived, they were surprised to find the trench stemming their march. The Arabs never employed such a strategy before. They were forced to camp on the further side of the trench. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took three thousand Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم with him and set up camp with Mount Sila at their back. The women and children were kept secure in fortresses.

THE DISBELIEVERS FAIL TO CROSS THE TRENCH

Although the trench made combat impossible, the disbelievers camped at the trench for a month. During this entire period, they failed to cross the trench. In the meantime, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and the Muslims held their positions. The situation was extremely difficult for the Muslims because they had to brave the biting cold and did not have enough provisions. In fact, the Muslims even dug the trench with rocks tied to their stomachs to suppress their hunger.

Describing the severity of their plight, Allāh says, *"When they approached you from above you and from beneath you. And when eyes were bewildered, hearts reached the throats and you harboured various thoughts about Allāh. On that occasion, the believers were put to the test and violently shaken."*

Commentators mention that *'from above you"* refers to the easterly rise of the valley, where the Banu Ghitfān, their allies, the people of Najd, the Banu Qurayzah and the Banu Nadhīr camped. They mention further that *'from beneath you"* refers to the slope where the Quraysh the Bani Kinanah and the people of Tihāmah camped.

"...you harboured various thoughts about Allāh." The general implication of the words includes the hypocrites as well as the sincere Muslims. While the believers *(Mu'minīn)* believed that Allāh would certainly assist them and the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, the Hypocrites thought differently. They truly believed that all traces of the Muslims would be eliminated because the disbelievers greatly outnumbered the Muslims.

SOME DISBELIEVERS ARE KILLED

Although the disbelievers were unable to cross the trench, arrows were frequently exchanged. Attempting to cross the trench, some polytheists led their horses into the trench, only to meet disaster. One of these polytheist was a person named Amr bin Abd Wad. He was injured in the battle of Badr and could not participate in Uhud. On the occasion of the battle of the trench, he jumped into the trench and shouted for someone to face him in combat.

He was armed to the teeth on that occasion and the Arabs considered him to be worth a thousand warriors. Taking permission from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ responded to his challenge. When Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ faced him, Amr asked him to identify himself. Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ replied that he was Ali, the son of Abu Tālib. Amr told Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ that he [Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ] was still young and that he did not like to spill his young blood. He requested that one of Sayyidina Ali's رضی اللہ عنہ uncles face him in combat.

Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ replied, "But I wish to spill your blood." Infuriated by this statement, Amr drew his sword and attacked Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ most violently. He struck such a hard blow with his sword that it shattered Sayyidina Ali's رضی اللہ عنہ shield. However, Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ managed to strike a blow at Amr's shoulder, causing him to drop to the ground.

Dust rose as the two locked in combat, but eventually Sayyidina Ali رضی اللہ عنہ was heard exclaiming "Allāhu Akbar". Everyone then knew that Amr was

now no more. The polytheists requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to hand over his corpse to them for a price of ten thousand dirhams as a form of blood money (another narration places the figure at twelve thousand). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم let them have the corpse for nothing saying, "Let them have it. We do not consume the price of a corpse.

According to another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Let them have it. His corpse is foul, as is the blood money.

A few other disbelievers were also killed in this battle, one of which was a Jew. The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم aunt, Sayyidah Safiyya bint Abdil Muttalib رضى الله عنها killed him as he was spying on the women outside a fortress.

From the Muslims, Sayyidina Sa'd bin Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه was fatally wounded by an arrow, which penetrated his medial arm vein. He supplicated to Allāh to grant him enough life to witness the humiliation and annihilation of the Banu Qurayzah. Allāh accepted this du'ā *(supplication)*, as is explained further on, Insha Allāh. Of the martyrs during this battle, historians have mentioned the following names:

- *Sayyidina Anas bin Aws* رضى الله عنه
- *Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Sahl* رضى الله عنه
- *Sayyidina Tufail bin Nu'mān* رضى الله عنه
- *Sayyidina Tha'laba bin Ghanama* رضى الله عنه
- *Sayyidina Ka'b bin Zaid* رضى الله عنه

A FEW SALĀHS WERE MISSED ON ACCOUNT THE BATTLE

Because of engagement in the battle, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once missed the Asr Salāh. He cursed the enemy saying, "May Allāh fill their homes and graves with fire as they have distracted us from the middle Salāh until after sunset." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then made wudhu (*ablution*) and performed the Asr Salāh, followed by the Maghrib Salāh.

Another narration reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم missed four Salāhs during the battle, viz. Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performed all these lapsed *(Qadha)* Salāhs in sequence after a portion of the night had passed. The Isha Salāh was performed within its time, though a bit later.

THE HOLY PROPHET'S صلى الله عليه وسلم DU'Ā *(SUPPLICATION)*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always engaged in du'ā *(supplication)* whenever faced with any difficulty. Before the enemy dispersed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made du'ā *(supplication)*incessantly for three days.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abi Awfa رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم supplicated thus:

*(**TRANSLATION:** "O Allāh, Who has revealed the Book, Who is swift in reckoning and Who defeats the armies! O Allāh! Defeat*

them and shake them.")

When the Sahābah (companions) رضى الله عنهم *asked to be taught a du'ā (supplication), the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *told them to recite:*

***(TRANSLATION:** "O Allāh! Safeguard our honour and replace our fear with peace.")*

THE DU'Ā *(SUPPLICATION)* IS ACCEPTED AND THE ENEMY IS DEFEATED

In response to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم du'ā *(supplication),* Allāh sent a severe wind, which uprooted the tents of the disbelievers, extinguished their fires and overturned their pots as they cooked. The wind was also bitterly cold and the disbelievers made up their minds to leave. Abu Sufyān, who was then the leader of the Quraysh, addressed the Quraysh saying, "We cannot remain here any longer. Our weapons have been destroyed and our animals are being killed. The Banu Qurayzah have broken the pledge and you can see the effects of the wind. Let us leave this place. I am leaving." He then mounted his camel and left. The Quraysh followed him, after which the Ghitfān tribe followed suit.

Allāh says in the above verse. *"O you who believe! Call Allāh's favour,"* to mind when the armies approached you, against which We dispatched a wind and troops that you could not see." These troops refer to the angels who were commissioned to instill fear into the hearts of the disbelievers. As the disbelievers retreated, the angels shouted, "Allāhu Akbar! Leave here. You cannot remain here."

After the disbelievers had left. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that they would never again leave to fight the Muslims, but that the Muslims would subsequently attack them. [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya", "Sīrah of Ibn Hishām", "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

It then occurred that the next time the Muslims met with them was when Makkah was conquered. They all accepted Islām then.

INCIDENTS DURING THE DIGGING OF THE TRENCH

The trench was dug during winter, when there was a shortage of food. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Sahābah *(companions)* رضى الله عنهم dug while rocks were tied on their bellies to suppress the overwhelming hunger. They had to excavate the sand and move it out on their backs.

All they had as rations was a handful of boiled barley served with smelly oil or fat. The food would be swallowed with great difficulty. It was on this occasion that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to hymn the words:

(**TRANSLATION:** "O Allāh! There is no life but the life of the Hereafter. So forgive the Muhājirīn and the Ansār.")

In response to this, the Sahabah رضى الله عنه chanted the following couplet:

(**TRANSLATION:** 'We are those who have pledged allegiance to Muhammad. To strive (for the preservation of Islām) as long as

we live.")

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exerted himself so much in the digging that his belly was not visible because of the amount of sand that settled on it. On this occasion he recited the following couplets of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Rawaha رضى الله عنه:

(**TRANSLATION: (1)** "O Allāh! If it was not for You, we would not have been rightly guided. We would also not have spent in charity, nor performed Salāh."

(2) "Shower tranquillity upon us and make our feet firm when we meet the enemy.

(3) "These people have surely transgressed against us, and we will oppose them if they intend to spread corruption.")

Bukhari (*v. 2 p. 588/9*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم raised his voice as he said, "We will oppose them." A narration of "Mishkāt" mentions that he twice repeated the phrase, "We will oppose them."

THE HOLY PROPHET'S صلى الله عليه وسلم PROPHESY THAT THE MUSLIMS WILL CONQUER CERTAIN LANDS

While digging the trench, the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم encountered a boulder which they could not shift. When The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم learnt about this, he personally reduced it to dust with three blow of his spade.

According to certain narrations, a bright spark emerged as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم struck the boulder. The light of the spark was so intense that it illuminated both ends of Madinah. It appeared like a lantern burning on a very dark night. Exclaiming "Allāhu Akbar", The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم foretold future conquests, upon which the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم also shouted "*Allāhu Akbar*". Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi and others Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the radiant light that flashed. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed that when the light flashed the first time, he saw the palaces of the city of Hīra and the city of the Khosrau of Persia. Thereupon Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that his Ummah will soon conquer these territories.

The second time, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw the red palaces of the Romans, and Jibr'īl عليه السلام told him that his Ummah will conquer these places as well. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then saw the palaces of San'ā (in Yemen), whereupon Jibr'īl عليه السلام also informed him that his Ummah will soon conquer the place. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told the Muslims to rejoice upon this news. They were extremely pleased and convinced about the reality of the prophesy.

When the hypocrites heard this, they mocked the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could see these distant places and prophesise the Muslim conquests, whereas they were engaged in the tedious effort of digging the trench.

According to other narrations, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited

Bismillah when he struck the boulder for the first time, thereby breaking the first third. Thereupon he exclaimed, "*Allāhu Akbar*! I have been granted the treasures of Shām (*Syria*)." When the second third of the boulder collapsed upon the second strike of the spade, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāhu Akbar! I have been given the keys to Persia." Finally, when the boulder was crushed with the third strike, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exclaimed, "Allāhu Akbar! I have been given the keys to Yemen."

On that occasion the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم swore by Allāh that he was shown the red palace of Rome, the white palace of Madā'in and the doors of San'ā.

When these territories were conquered during the khilāfah (*Caliphate*) of Sayyidina Umar and Uthmān رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه used to say, "By the Being in whose control my life lies! The keys of these territories, and of all those you are to conquer until Qiyāmah (*doomsday*) have already been given to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, (i.e. He was already given the good news beforehand). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has passed on from this world and you people are achieving it all." [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" v. 4 p. 99-102*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم, "There will be no Caesar after this Caesar and no Khosrau (leader of Persia) after the Khosrau. By the Being in whose control is my life! You people will spend the treasures of the Caesar and Khosrau in Allāh's path."

In another hadith, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Allāh has granted me the east and the west of the earth. The kingdom of my Ummah will extend to the territories Allāh has granted to me."

THE INVITATION OF SAYYIDINA JĀBIR رضى الله عنه

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that when the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم encountered a large boulder while digging the trench, they reported the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that he would see to the matter. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stood up from his place, he had a stone fastened to his belly because of extreme hunger. Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه says that the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم had not tasted any food for the past three days.

He says that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم struck the boulder, it collapsed into a heap of sand. Taking permission from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه went home. Upon reaching home, he asked his wife whether they had anything to eat because he could sense the starvation felt by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. All she could produce was a leather bag containing one sā (approximately three kilograms) of wheat and their little tame kid goat.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه then slaughtered the kid, placing the meat into a pot, while his wife ground the wheat to make flour. When the two were done, he left to invite the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to a meal. Before he left, his wife told him not to embarrass her in front of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم (i.e. not to invite too many people to the meagre meal).

When Sayyidina Jābir رضی اللہ عنہ reached the presence of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, he said, "We have prepared a little food for you and one or two others you wish to bring with you." When the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم asked about the quantity of food, Sayyidina Jābir رضی اللہ عنہ informed him about the situation. Thereupon, the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said that the food was plenty and he made a loud announcement, "O people of the trench! Jābir has prepared a meal for us!" Consequently, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم left for Sayyidina Jābir رضی اللہ عنہ house accompanied by all the Muhājirīn (*emigrants*) and Ansār.

Sayyidina Jābir رضی اللہ عنہ hurried ahead to the house and informed his wife about the situation. In anger she said, "This is what I feared, I told you not to embarrass me before the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Did you inform the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم about the entire situation?" When he replied in the affirmative, she said, "Then Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم know best." [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" v. 4 p. 98*]

Upon reaching the house, the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم mixed a bit of his blessed saliva with the dough and the meat, praying for blessings. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم then instructed that the lady be summoned for baking the bread and that the pot should not be removed from the fire. He then instructed the Sahābah (*companions*) رضی اللہ عنہم not to crowd the area and they all sat down.

When the bread and food were ready, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم himself served it to the Sahābah (*companions*) رضی اللہ عنہم until they were all satisfied. Sayyidina Jābir رضی اللہ عنہ says, "A thousand people ate from the meal. By Allāh! Each one of them ate to his fill and returned fully satisfied. Our pot cooked as much food as it originally contained, and the flour remained the same quantity as it was (i.e. the food remained as if it was untouched)." The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم then said to Sayyidina Jābir's رضی اللہ عنہ wife, "Eat well from the leftovers and send some to your neighbours because people have been affected by starvation." [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 588/9*]

Allama Ibn Kathīr رحمۃ اللہ علیہ reports from Sayyidina Nu'mān bin Bashīr's رضی اللہ عنہ sister that her mother gave her a loaf of dates to carry in her garment for her father and maternal uncle, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Rawaha رضی اللہ عنہ. They were all busy digging the trench and were to eat the dates the following morning. As she searched for her father and uncle, she passed by the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. When the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم asked her what she was carrying, she replied that it was dates for her father and uncle.

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم asked her to hand the dates over to him, which she did. She says that the dates were so few that they did not even fill the Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم hands. Thereafter, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم asked for a sheet to be spread before him, and he placed the dates on it. Thereafter, he instructed someone to announce to all the Sahābah (*companions*) رضی اللہ عنہم digging the trench that the morning meal was ready to be served. All the Sahābah (*companions*) رضی اللہ عنہم then continued to eat from the dates until they returned contented. [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" v. 4 p. 99*]

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ مَّا وَعَدَنَا ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿١٢﴾

وَإِذْ قَالَت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَـٰٓأَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَٱرْجِعُوا۟ ۚ وَيَسْتَـْٔذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمُ ٱلنَّبِىَّ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ وَمَا هِىَ بِعَوْرَةٍ ۖ إِن يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا (13) وَلَوْ دُخِلَتْ عَلَيْهِم مِّنْ أَقْطَارِهَا ثُمَّ سُئِلُوا۟ ٱلْفِتْنَةَ لَـَٔاتَوْهَا وَمَا تَلَبَّثُوا۟ بِهَآ إِلَّا يَسِيرًا (14) وَلَقَدْ كَانُوا۟ عَـٰهَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مِن قَبْلُ لَا يُوَلُّونَ ٱلْأَدْبَـٰرَ ۚ وَكَانَ عَهْدُ ٱللَّهِ مَسْـُٔولًا (15) قُل لَّن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلْفِرَارُ إِن فَرَرْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ أَوِ ٱلْقَتْلِ وَإِذًا لَّا تُمَتَّعُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (16) قُلْ مَن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يَعْصِمُكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً ۚ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا (17) ۞ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُعَوِّقِينَ مِنكُمْ وَٱلْقَآئِلِينَ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا ۖ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ ٱلْبَأْسَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (18) أَشِحَّةً عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ ٱلْخَوْفُ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ تَدُورُ أَعْيُنُهُمْ كَٱلَّذِى يُغْشَىٰ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۖ فَإِذَا ذَهَبَ ٱلْخَوْفُ سَلَقُوكُم بِأَلْسِنَةٍ حِدَادٍ أَشِحَّةً عَلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ فَأَحْبَطَ ٱللَّهُ أَعْمَـٰلَهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرًا (19) يَحْسَبُونَ ٱلْأَحْزَابَ لَمْ يَذْهَبُوا۟ ۖ وَإِن يَأْتِ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ يَوَدُّوا۟ لَوْ أَنَّهُم بَادُونَ فِى ٱلْأَعْرَابِ يَسْـَٔلُونَ عَنْ أَنۢبَآئِكُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ فِيكُم مَّا قَـٰتَلُوٓا۟ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (20)

(12) When the hypocrites and those with a disease in their hearts said, "Allāh and His Prophet have only made deceptive promises to us." (13) When a group of them said, "O people of Yathrib! You cannot remain here, so leave." A party of them sought leave from the Holy Prophet saying, "Our homes are unprotected," whereas they were not left unprotected. They sought only to desert. (14) If an enemy has to attack them from the frontiers (of the city) and they were asked to cause anarchy, they would comply with only a fleeting hesitance. (15) They had certainly made a pledge with Allāh before that they will never turn their backs. A pledge made with Allāh is accountable. (16) Say, "Taking flight will not profit you if you were to flee from death or killing. You will then enjoy only a few days of life." (17) Say, "Who can protect you from Allāh if He intends evil or good for you? Besides Allāh, they will not find any protecting friend, nor any helper." (18) Allāh has perfect knowledge of those of you who present obstacles and those who say to their brothers, "Come to us." It is seldom that they participate in battle. (19) They are miserly towards you. When fear comes, you will see them look at you with their eyes rolling like a person being overtaken by death. When the fear abates, they insult you with sharp tongues, greedy for wealth. These are the ones who do not believe, so Allāh annihilates their deeds. This is an extremely simple task for Allāh. (20) They think that the troops have not retreated. If the troops were to arrive, they

hope that they were rather in the outback inquiring about your condition. Even if they were with you, they would fight only a little.

THE TREACHERY AND MISCHIEF OF THE HYPOCRITES

The foregoing verses describe the verbal and physical betrayal of the hypocrites. Allāh says, *"When the hypocrites and those with a disease in their hearts (i.e. those with weak faith) said, 'Allāh and His Prophet have only made deceptive promises to us."* Commentators write that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم conveyed the glad tidings of conquering Rome, Persia and Yemen (during the digging of the trench), the hypocrites said, "Look at these people! They are busy toiling with the trench and cannot even leave Madinah without being killed; yet they talk about conquering distant lands. These promises are deceptive." It was on this occasion that Allāh revealed the above verse.

Since the Hypocrites never believed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's Holy Prophet, how was it possible that they said, *"Allāh and His Holy Prophet"?* In reality, the hypocrites had no religion, but defected to the religion that suited their cause. Since they pretended to be Muslims and were addressing the Muslims, they were forced to refer to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Allāh's Holy Prophet. However, they failed to realise that attributing deception to Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sufficient to reveal their hypocrisy, even though they attempted to conceal this fact by attesting to his apostleship.

"When a group of them (the hypocrites) *said, 'O people of Yathrib (Madinah)! You cannot remain here, so leave.'"* They attempted to weaken the resolve of the Muslims by scaring them into believing that they will be annihilated if they were to engage in battle. Commentators mention that the leader of the hypocrites, Abdullāh bin Ubayy, and his companions made this statement.

Other commentators have interpreted the statement *"You cannot remain here, so leave"* to mean that the Muslims cannot remain as Muslims in the face of such opposition, but should rather return to their former religion. They thus urged the Muslims to renege the pledge of allegiance they took with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Yathrib was the former name of Madinah. Scholars mention that it was the name of a person from the Amāliqa tribe. Because of the fact that the word Yathrib is derived from a root noun meaning 'to revile,' it is prohibited to refer to Madinah as Yathrib.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever calls Makkah Yathrib should seek forgiveness from Allāh. It is Tāba. It is Tāba. It is Tāba." [*Ahmad*]

Since the arrival of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Madinah, the town popularly became known as Madinah, even though it has other names.

"A party of them (the Hypocrites) sought leave from the Holy Prophet saying, 'Our homes are unprotected,' whereas they were not left unprotected (and vulnerable to enemy attack because the site of the trench was a distance from their homes)."

Commentators mention that when they hypocrites told the Muslims, *"O*

people of Yathrib! You cannot remain here, so leave," the Banu Hāritha and Banu Salima tribes sought permission from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to leave the site of digging.

Allāh refuted their claims saying that their homes were not unprotected, but *"They sought only to desert."*

"If an enemy has to attack them from the frontiers (of the city) and they (the Hypocrites) were asked to cause anarchy (by fighting the Muslims), they would comply with only a fleeting hesitance." If such a situation arose, they would not care for their homes being unprotected because they harbour hatred for the Muslims and display allegiance to the disbelievers.

Referring to the same hypocrites, Allāh mentions further, *"They had certainly made a pledge with Allāh from before that they will never turn their backs."* Commentators mention that this verse refers to the Banu Hāritha or the Banu Salima tribes, who deserted the battlefield of Uhud. Before the battle of the trench, they pledged not to desert.

Other commentators say that the verse refers to those hypocrites who did not participate in the battle of Badr and, when they learnt of the tremendous Muslim victory, they resolved to display their valour in all subsequent battles. However, whenever the battle grew furious, they shelved their promises and deserted. Allāh reminds them that *"A pledge made with Allāh is accountable."*

Sounding a warning to the deserters, Allāh says, *"Say, 'Taking flight will not profit you if you were to flee from death or killing. You will then enjoy only a few days of life."* Every person will die when his life has expired. This will occur at a specific time, whether in battle or not. Therefore, death cannot be averted by deserting the battlefield.

In any event, if Allāh wishes to destroy a person, none can stop Him. Therefore, Allāh says, *"Say, 'Who can protect you from Allāh if He intends evil or good for you* (by saving you life)? *Besides Allāh, they will not find any protecting friend, nor any helper."*

As a further warning to those who attempt to dissuade others from Jihād, Allāh says, *"Allāh has perfect knowledge of those of you who present obstacles and those who say to their brothers, 'Come to us.* "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that a sincere Sahabi (*canpanion*) رضى الله عنه met his Munāfiq (*Hypocrite*) stepbrother during the battle of Ahzāb. His brother was busy eating roasted meat and drinking 'nabīdh' (a sweet drink made from dates). The sincere Muslim asked him, "You are here while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is amidst the spears and arrows?" His brother replied, "Come and join me. You people are besieged to the extent that you cannot resist." The sincere Muslim said, "You are a liar. By Allāh! I shall definitely inform the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about what you said." When he reported the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Jibrīl عليه السلام appeared with the revelation of the above verse, viz. *"Allāh has perfect knowledge of those of you who present obstacles and those who say to their brothers, 'Come to us."*

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" *(v. 3 p. 518)* reports that the Jews sent a message to the hypocrites saying, "Why do you destroy yourselves by aligning with Abu Sufyān and his people? If they ever have the upper hand over you, they will not

spare any of you. We pity you people. You had rather join ranks with us because we are your brothers (because we are Residents of the same town)." Under the influence of the Jews, Abdullāh bin Ubayy and other hypocrites attempted to dissuade the Muslims from fighting. They told them that they were fighting a losing battle with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and had better join the Jews because Abu Sufyān and the Makkans would not spare them. Upon hearing this, the Muslims were further strengthened in resolve and conviction.

Allāh says further, *"It is seldom that they (the Hypocrites) participate in battle. They are miserly towards you. When fear comes, you will see them look at you with their eyes rolling like a person being overtaken by death. When the fear abates, they insult you with sharp tongues, greedy for wealth."* In their desire for the booty they will accuse the Muslims of treachery if they are not granted a share of it. They are too cowardly to fight, yet are covetous of the booty.

"These are the ones who do not believe, so Allāh annihilates their deeds. This is an extremely simple task for Allāh." None can oppose Allāh in this regard and still demand his reward.

"They think that the troops have not retreated." Further emphasising the cowardice of the hypocrites, Allāh says that they do not even want to emerge when they are informed that the enemy has retreated.

"If the troops were to arrive, they hope that they were rather in the outback inquiring about your condition. Even if they were with you, they would fight only a little." They may only participate for show without any fervour, claiming to be pivotal to victory when the spoils of war have to be distributed.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ
كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾ وَلَمَّا رَءَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْأَحْزَابَ قَالُوا هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَصَدَقَ اللَّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ ۚ وَمَا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا إِيمَانًا وَتَسْلِيمًا ﴿٢٢﴾ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ
عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَنتَظِرُ ۖ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾ لِّيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ
الصَّادِقِينَ بِصِدْقِهِمْ وَيُعَذِّبَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ إِن شَاءَ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾ وَرَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِغَيْظِهِمْ لَمْ يَنَالُوا خَيْرًا ۚ وَكَفَى اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
الْقِتَالَ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ قَوِيًّا عَزِيزًا ﴿٢٥﴾

(21) There is definitely an excellent example in Allāh's messenger for the one who fears Allāh and the Last Day, and remembers Allāh abundantly. (22) When the believers see the troops they say, "This is what Allāh and His messenger have promised us. Allāh and His messenger have spoken the truth." They then increase in faith and submission. (23) Among the believers there are men who are true to the covenant they vow to Allāh. Of them is he who has fulfilled his

pledge, and he who is waiting. They have not changed in the least. (24) So that Allāh may reward the truthful for their truthfulness and punish the hypocrites if He wills or forgive them. Allāh is always Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (25) Allāh returned the disbelievers with their fury without achieving any good. Allāh suffices for the believers in battle. Allāh is Omnipotent, Mighty.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE FOR PEOPLE. THERE ARE THOSE BELIEVERS (*MU'MINĪN*) WHO FULFILL THE PLEDGE THEY MAKE WITH ALLĀH

Allāh urges the believers (*Mu'minīn*) to emulate the life of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They are to do exactly as he did and never to desert the battlefield as long as he was fighting. The instruction applies to all people until Qiyāmah (*dooms day*), when He says, *"There is definitely an excellent example in Allāh 's messenger for the one who fears Allāh and the Last Day, and remembers Allāh abundantly."*

The verse alludes to the behaviour of the hypocrites who claim to be believers (*Mu'minīn*), yet flee from the battlefield and discourage others from fighting. A claim which is not supported by deeds is worthless. The hypocrites fail to uphold their word when circumstances threaten the welfare of their material possessions.

Allāh then praises the believers (*Mu'minīn*) when He says, *"When the believers see the troops they say, 'This is what Allāh and His messenger have promised us. Allāh and His messenger have spoken the truth.' They then increase in faith and submission."* i.e. The promise of tests in the Qur'ān and Ahadīth are true, as represented by an attack from the enemy. The believers (*Mu'minīn*) then grow stronger in their faith and are keener to submit to Allāh's commands.

Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Most assuredly We will test you with a bit of fear, hunger, and a deficiency in wealth, life and provisions. So give glad tidings to the patient ones.* (They are) *those who, when any adversity befall them, say, 'Verily to Allāh do we belong, and to Him is our return.' These are the ones upon whom the collective and special mercies of Allāh descend and who are rightly guided."* [*Surah 2, verses 155-157*]

Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Do you think that you will enter Heaven when Allah has not yet learnt of those of you who wage Jihād, and those who remain steadfast?"* [*Surah 3, verse 142*]

The opening verses of Surah Ankabūt (*Surah 29*) say, *"Alif Lām Mīm. Do people think that they will be left to say, 'We believe!' without being tested? We certainly tested those before them, and Allāh will definitely know of those who are true and He will definitely know the liars."* Verse 11 of the same Surah Ankabūt says, *"Allāh will certainly know those who believe and will definitely know the hypocrites."*

All these verses make it clear that the believers (*Mu'minīn*) will certainly be put to test so that they are discerned from the hypocrites.

Allāh then speaks of those believers (*Mu'minīn*) who made further pledges with Allāh. Allāh says, *"Among the believers there are men who are true to the covenant they vow to Allāh (to sacrifice their lives in Jihād,). Of them is he who has*

fulfilled his pledge, and he who is waiting. They have not changed in the least."

In relation to this verse, the commentators have narrated an incident reported by Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه. He says that his paternal uncle, Sayyidina Anas bin Nadhar رضى الله عنه bitterly regretted his inability to participate in the battle of Badr. He addressed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "I was unable to participate in the first opportunity to fight the Polytheists. If Allāh affords us another opportunity to fight them, I shall show my mettle by throwing myself into the thick of battle."

Consequently, he participated in the battle of Uhud. When the Muslims suffered a reversal in the battle, he supplicated to Allāh saying, "O Allāh! I apologise for what the believers (*Mu'minīn*) have done and I absolve myself from what the disbelievers have done." Saying this, he advanced into the enemy lines. He passed by Sayyidina Sa'd bin Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه, who asked him where he was heading. He said," By Allāh! I can smell the fragrance of Heaven coming from the direction of Uhud." He then fought until he was martyred.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that Sayyidina Anas bin Nadhar's رضى الله عنه sister was the only one who could recognise his body because the disbelievers had mutilated his body, severing the nose and ears from his face. She recognised him by his fingertips only. There were more than eighty sword, spear and arrow wounds on his body. Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه says that they all believed that it was with reference to people like his uncle that Allāh revealed the verse *'Among the believers there are men who are true to the covenant they vow to Allāh..."* [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 5 30, Bukhari v. 2 p. 705*]

Some of the other Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم to whom this verse applies are:

The leader of all martyrs, Sayyidina Hamza bin Abdil Muttalib رضى الله عنه.
Sayyidina Mus'ab bin Umair رضى الله عنه.

Sayyidina Talha bin Ubaidillah رضى الله عنه.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If you wish to see, walking about on earth, a person *"who has fulfilled his pledge,"* then look at Talha bin Ubaidillah." Although Sayyidina Talha رضى الله عنه was not martyred during Uhud or Ahzāb, he displayed astounding valour during the battle of Uhud, when he acted as a human shield for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He stopped the arrows with his bare hands, because of which his hand became paralysed. He sustained more than seventy wounds in the battle, proving that he did not fail to respond to the call of martyrdom. He lived on after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and was martyred during the battle of Jamal in the 30th year after the Hijrah. Those 'Muslims' who are antagonistic towards the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم should ponder about the sacrifices that the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم made for Islām.

"Of them is he who has fulfilled his pledge, and he who is waiting. They have not changed in the least." This part of the verse refers to those who have not been martyred, but are ever prepared to meet martyrdom. They have not changed a bit in their resolve.

Allāh presented the occasion of the battle *"So that Allāh may reward the*

truthful for their truthfulness and punish the hypocrites if He wills or forgive them (after they repent and accept Islām). Allāh is always Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."

NOTE: Some commentators have interpreted *"he who has fulfilled his pledge"* as *"he who has left this world."* Therefore, it will still refer to those martyrs who fulfilled their pledge and sacrificed their lives for Allāh.

Allāh continues to say, *"Allāh returned the disbelievers with their fury without achieving any good. Allāh suffices for the believers in battle. Allāh is Omnipotent, Mighty."* Allāh can assist any army as he assisted the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم and defeat the enemy, causing them to return home crestfallen.

وَأَنزَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَٰهَرُوهُم مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِن صَيَاصِيهِمْ وَقَذَفَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلرُّعْبَ فَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ وَتَأْسِرُونَ فَرِيقًا ﴿٢٦﴾ وَأَوْرَثَكُمْ أَرْضَهُمْ وَدِيَٰرَهُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلَهُمْ وَأَرْضًا لَّمْ تَطَـُٔوهَا ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرًا ﴿٢٧﴾

(26) Allāh made those people of the Book who assisted them descend from their fortresses and He cast fear into their hearts. You execute a party of them and take another party as prisoners. (27) Allāh made you successors to their land, their homes, their wealth and a land that you have not set foot upon. Allāh has power over all things.

THE JEWS PAY FOR THEIR TREACHERY AS THE MUSLIMS DEFEAT THEM

As mentioned earlier, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entered into a treaty with the three Jewish tribes of Madinah. Among the clauses of the treaty was that they were all to join forces to defend Madinah against an enemy attack. The Banu Qaynuqa broke the treaty after the battle of Badr and were duly punished. The Banu Nadhīr were banished from Madinah in the 4th year after the Hijrah, after which they instigated the Quraysh and other tribes to attack the Muslims, resulting in the battle of Ahzāb (as has already been mentioned). Therefore, only the Banu Qurayzah remained true to their word and continued to reside in Madinah.

Among those to instigate the Quraysh and the other tribes against the Muslims was the leader of the Banu Nadhīr, Huyay bin Akhtab. When the enemy forces camped outside Madinah, Huyay managed to sneak into the fort of K'ab bin Asad, the leader of the Banu Qurayzah, in an attempt to persuade him also to break the treaty with the Muslims. Initially, K'ab bin Asad locked the door of his fort and refused Huyay entry saying, "I am bound to the treaty with Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم I find him exuding trustworthiness and truthfulness and cannot break the treaty."

However, Huyay bin Akhtab persistently pressed his point home. Eventually, K'ab bin Asad asked Huyay, "What will happen to us if Muhammad

صلى الله عليه وسلم returns home safely and his enemies retreat?" Huyay pledged to then enter K'ab bin Asad's fort and suffer the same fate as he would have to face. K'ab bin Asad agreed to this and broke the treaty with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received intelligence of this, he dispatched Sayyidina Sa'd bin Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Sa'd bin Ubādah رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Rawaha رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Khawāt bin Jubair رضى الله عنه to investigate. They returned with confirmation of the news. Later, when the disbelievers retreated, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned home and took a bath. Thereafter, Jibrīl عليه السلام came to him saying, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Have you laid down your weapons?" When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied in the affirmative, Jibrīl عليه السلام said, "By Allāh! We (the angels) have not yet laid down our weapons. Allāh commands you to march to the Banu Qurayzah. I am also headed in their direction and shall cause an earthquake to shake their fortresses."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then instructed the Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم to march to the Banu Qurayzah and to perform their Asr Salāh there. Some Sahābah (*companions*) رضى الله عنهم interpreted the command literally and only performed their Qadha Asr Salāh after reaching (because the time for Asr had expired by then). Others interpreted the command to mean that they should reach the Banu Qurayzah as soon as possible, but that they should perform their Salāh en route if the time set in. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not rebuke any of these two groups for their interpretation. Ulema (*scholars*) have deduced from this that the differences between the schools of Islāmic jurisprudence are all justified and none may condemn another.

The Banu Qurayzah lived approximately four miles away from Madinah. When the Muslims reached their fortress, the Jews were already locked in. Consequently, the Muslims besieged the fortress for about 25 days.

When the situation grew desperate, K'ab bin Asad addressed his people saying, "I have three proposals to make to you. You may choose any one you like. The first is that we all believe in Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. I swear by Allāh that we all know that he is Allāh's true messenger and the Holy Prophet. He ideally fits the description of the final Prophet, which you read in Allāh's Book (the Torah). By doing so, your lives, children, wives and wealth will be safe." The Jews responded by saying that they were not prepared to forsake their religion.

K'ab continued, "If you decline this proposal, the second is that we all kill our women and children and fight to the last. Allāh will then decide the rest. If we are destroyed, we will not have to worry about our women and children. However, if we are victorious, we can always find new wives and father new children." The Jews declined this proposal as well saying. "What enjoyment can we have in life if we were to kill these poor siblings?"

He then proposed the third alternative saying, "Tonight is the night of the Sabbath. We can stealthily attack the Muslims tonight because they will not expect us to be fighting on this night." The Jews declined this proposal as well saying, "Why spoil the day of Sabbath."

The Banu Qurayzah then sent a message to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم requesting that Sayyidina Abu Lubabah رضى الله عنه be sent to them. He was an Ansāri Sahabi whose tribe were allies to the Banu Qurayzah during earlier times. They wanted to consult with him about their course of action.

When Sayyidina Abu Lubabah رضى الله عنه came to them, their women and children wept before him. They asked him whether they should surrender and descend from the fortress as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم requested. He told them that they should surrender and he also ran his finger across his throat, indicating that they would be killed when they did so.

Sayyidina Abu Lubabah رضى الله عنه immediately realised that he was wrong to make this indication to them because it betrayed the secret of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He therefore proceeded straight to the Masjid, where he bound himself to a pillar, declaring that he will not release himself until Allāh accepts his repentance. Commentators say that a verse of Surah Anfāl was revealed in this regard. Where Allāh says, *"O you who believe, do not betray Allāh and the messenger and do not knowingly' betray your mutual trusts."* [*Surah 8, verse 27*]

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم heard about the incident, he said, "If he had come to me first, I would have sought forgiveness from Allāh on his behalf. However, he chose to hand the matter over to Allāh, so I cannot untie him until Allāh forgives him. He remained in this state for six days, during which his wife used to untie him for the duration of Salāh and then tie him up again afterwards. Allāh accepted his repentance and revealed verse 102 of Surah Taubah (*Surah 9*), where He says, *"There are others who admit to their sins. They have mixed their deeds, some being good, while the others are evil. Soon Allāh will accept their repentance. Undoubtedly Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

When people rushed to untie him, he told them that he wanted to be released by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Consequently, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم released him when he arrived for the Fajr Salāh.

The Banu Qurayzah could not resist the Muslim forces and were constrained to surrender to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They were prepared to accept whatever decision he made with regard to them. The members of the Aws tribe approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, asking him to allow them to decide the matter because the Banu Qurayzah used to be their allies. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Should I not hand the matter over to a member of your tribe?" When they agreed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم allowed their leader, Sayyidina Sa'd bin Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه to decide the affair.

When the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم were camped at Mount Silā during the battle of Ahzāb, an arrow struck Sayyidina Sa'd bin Muādh رضى الله عنه, which penetrated his medial arm vein. Sensing that the wound would be fatal, he supplicated to Allāh to grant him enough life to witness the humiliation and annihilation of the Banu Qurayzah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم allowed him to recuperate in the tent of a woman called Rufaydah رضى الله عنها. He was there that he received the message to decide the affair of the Banu Qurayzah.

When he arrived to meet the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Masjid, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stood up and instructed the Sahābah (*Companions*)

رضى الله عنهم saying, "Stand for your leader." (The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم issued this command because Sayyidina Sa'd رضى الله عنه was severely injured and could not alight from the conveyance without assistance).

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that he was pleased to have him decide the matter and the Jews were also pleased. (The Jews were pleased about this because they expected leniency from a person of the Aws tribe, who were their allies in previous times).

Sayyidina Sa'd رضى الله عنه pronounced his decision saying that all able bodied men were to be executed, their wealth distributed among the Muslims, and all women and children were to be taken captive. Upon hearing this decision, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that his decision corresponded with Allāh's decision. This also corresponded with the command of the Torah.

Trenches were dug in the streets of Madinah and the men were beheaded. Among those executed were Huyay bin Akhtab and K'ab bin Asad, both of whom were mentioned earlier. Huyay was the father of Sayyidah Safiyya رضى الله عنها, one of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives. She was captured after the battle of Khaybar in the 7th year after the Hijrah.

All the men and one woman were executed. The woman was executed because she dropped a heavy grindstone on Sayyidina Khallād bin Suwaid رضى الله عنه, killing him instantly. Sayyidina Atiyya Qurazi رضى الله عنه, who later accepted Islām, was a Jew from among the Banu Qurayzah and was not killed at that time because he was not yet matured. The puberty of boys was assessed by checking whether their pubic hair had begun to grow. Consequently, all those males whose pubic hair had begun to emerge were executed, while the others were considered immature and spared. Various narrations report varying figures with regard to the number of people executed. The figures quoted are 600, 700 and 800.

On the night when the Banu Qurayzah announced that they would accept The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم decision, the following persons (who neither belonged to the Banu Qurayzah, nor the Banu Nadhīr) accepted Islām:

Sayyidina Tha'laba bin Sa'īd رضى الله عنه.

Sayyidina Asad bin Sa'īd رضى الله عنه.

Sayyidina Asad bin Ubaid رضى الله عنه. All three belonged to the Banu Adal tribe.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم distributed the wealth, women and children of the Banu Qurayzah among the Muslim warriors and also extracted a fifth from the sum according to the principles of distribution. Some of the captives were sent to be sold in Najd. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent them with Sayyidina Sa'd bin Zaid Ansāri رضى الله عنه, who was instructed to use the profits to purchase weapons and horses for Jihād.

The wound of Sayyidina Sa'd bin Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه eventually opened, causing him to bleed to death. Since he was a heavy person, the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم were surprised to find his corpse extremely light. When they reported the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he told them,

"Besides you, there are other creation who are also lifting the body. By the Being in whose control is my life! The angels were exuberant when they received the soul of Sa'd and Allāh's throne shook as a result of his demise."

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports that they proceeded with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to bury Sayyidina Sa'd رضى الله عنه. After he was laid to rest, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stood for a long while continuously reciting *"SubhānAllāh"*, after which he stood a long while reciting *"Allāhu Akbar"*. The Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم also joined in the recitation of *"Allāhu Akbar"*.

The Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم then asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم why he recited *"Subhān Allāh"* and then *"Allāhu Akbar"*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "The grave of this pious servant was beginning to constrict upon him. I recited *"Subhān Allāh"* until Allāh alleviated the difficulty.

A narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه quotes the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying, "This is the person for whom Allāh's throne shuddered, the doors of the heavens were flung open, and for whom seventy thousand angels presented themselves. The grave constricted upon him for a while, but was soon stopped."

One can well imagine the state of sinners in the grave when the grave of such an illustrious person constricted.

It was mentioned earlier that Abu Sufyān told the Quraysh before they departed, "The Banu Qurayzah have broken the pledge..." It was also mentioned in the commentary of *'from above you,"* that it refers to the easterly rise of the valley, where the Banu Ghitfān, their allies, the people of Najd, the Banu Qurayzah and the Banu Nadhīr camped. In view of these statements, one may query the fact that the Banu Qurayzah were punished for breaking the treaty, because it appears from the above that they had already joined ranks with the other disbelievers.

The fact of the matter is that they had initially pledged support for the cause of the disbelievers, but were dissuaded by a clever plan of Sayyidina Nu'aim bin Mas'ūd. When Sayyidina Nu'aim رضى الله عنه accepted Islām, he said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that his family was unaware of his conversion, but he eagerly wanted to be of service to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him to devise a plan whereby the disbelievers are discouraged from assisting each other.

Sayyidina Nu'aim رضى الله عنه used to associate with the Banu Qurayzah during the period of ignorance. He therefore approached them saying, "You people are well aware of my friendship with you?" When they admitted to his strong ties of friendship, he then told them that the Quraysh and the Banu Ghitfān were not really their allies. He impressed upon their minds that if the Quraysh army was defeated, they could easily return to Makkah, but the Banu Qurayzah had nowhere to go because their home and hearth was in Madinah. They would then be stranded without any allies and would be unable to face the Muslim army.

He proposed to them that they request the Quraysh and the Banu Ghitfān to hand over their leaders to the Banu Qurayzah as a guarantee so that these tribes

do not desert them if the Muslims defeat them. The Banu Qurayzah accepted the proposal.

Sayyidina Nu'aim رضى الله عنه then approached the Quraysh and told them that while the Banu Qurayzah promised to align with them, they secretly informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they wished to be his allies and would send the leaders of the Quraysh and Bani Ghitfān to him for execution. He therefore advised them not to surrender any of their people to the Banu Qurayzah if they requested for a guarantee. He then said the same thing to the Banu Ghitfān.

It later transpired that the Quraysh and Ghitfān sent Ikrima bin Abu Jahl with a few people from either tribe to meet with the Jews of the Banu Qurayzah. They informed the Banu Qurayzah that their camels and horses were dying and that they should all collectively attack the Muslims the following morning. The Banu Qurayzah insisted that they will not join until they received a few people from either tribe as guarantee that they will not be left alone if the Muslims are victorious.

When the Quraysh received the message, they acknowledged that Sayyidina Nu'aim رضى الله عنه was right and sent a message to the Banu Qurayzah that they will not give any of their men as guarantee. When the Banu Qurayzah received this message, they declined to fight against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In this manner, the Banu Qurayzah broke their pledges to both, the Muslims and the disbelievers. [*"Sīrah Ibn Hishām", "Al Bidāya wan Nihāya"*]

PART TWENTY-TWO

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ إِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ
أُمَتِّعْكُنَّ وَأُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا (28) وَإِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلدَّارَ
ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَٰتِ مِنكُنَّ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (29) يَٰنِسَآءَ ٱلنَّبِيِّ مَن يَأْتِ
مِنكُنَّ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ يُضَٰعَفْ لَهَا ٱلْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ
يَسِيرًا (30) ۞ وَمَن يَقْنُتْ مِنكُنَّ لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا نُّؤْتِهَآ أَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ
وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهَا رِزْقًا كَرِيمًا (31) يَٰنِسَآءَ ٱلنَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۚ إِنِ ٱتَّقَيْتُنَّ
فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِٱلْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ ٱلَّذِى فِى قَلْبِهِۦ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا (32) وَقَرْنَ فِى
بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ۖ وَأَقِمْنَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتِينَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَأَطِعْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ
تَطْهِيرًا (33) وَٱذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِى بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْحِكْمَةِ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا (34)

(28) O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Say to your wives, "If you desire the life of this world and its adornments, then come forward. I shall grant you a generous provision and separate from you in a cordial manner." (29) "And if you desire Allāh, His messenger and the home of the Hereafter, then Allāh has certainly prepared a grand reward for those of you who will do good deeds." (30) O wives of the Holy Prophet! If any of you perpetrates an act of foolishness, her punishment will be multiplied twice. This is simple for Allāh. (31) Any of you who is obedient to Allāh and His messenger, and does good deeds, then We will grant her twice the reward. And We have prepared for her a bountiful provision. (32) O wives of the Holy Prophet! You are not like any other women. If you fear Allāh then do not speak in lowered tones lest he in whose heart is a disease should be enticed. And speak in a befitting manner. (33) Remain in your homes and do not make a display of yourselves as was the practice of the former

period of ignorance. Establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and obey Allāh and His messenger. Allāh only wishes to rid you of filth, O members of the household, and to purify you thoroughly. (34) And remember the verses and wisdom recited in your homes. Indeed Allāh is Compassionate, Informed.

ADVICE TO THE WIVES OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Commentators record that the nine wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked him for an increase in their allowance. The wives were:

1. *Sayyidah Ayshah* رضى الله عنها *Bint Abu Bakr* رضى الله عنه
2. *Sayyidah Hafsa* رضى الله عنها *Bint Umar* رضى الله عنه
3. *Sayyidah Umm Habība* رضى الله عنها *Bint Abi Sufyān* رضى الله عنه
4. *Sayyidah Umm Salamah* رضى الله عنها *Bint Abi Umayyah* رضى الله عنه
5. *Sayyidah Sauda* رضى الله عنها *Bint Zam'ah* رضى الله عنه
6. *Sayyidah Zainab* رضى الله عنها *Bint Jahsh* رضى الله عنه
7. *Sayyidah maymūnah* رضى الله عنها *Bint Hāritha* رضى الله عنه
8. *Sayyidah Safiyya* رضى الله عنها *Bint Huyay Bin Akhtab* رضى الله عنه
9. *Sayyidah Juwairiyya* رضى الله عنها *Bint Hārith* رضى الله عنه

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم disliked this request because, being wives of the leader of both worlds, they were expected to be patient with their lot. The difficulties they endured served to raise their ranks). Displeased with their request, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم swore an oath not to associate with them for a month.

The news spread among the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had divorced his wives. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه decided to investigate the matter and met with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He said, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! I have heard people saying in your Masjid that you have divorced your wives." When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed him that he had not divorced his wives, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه sought permission to inform the others about this. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم permitted him, he announced that no divorce had taken place.

After 29 days, Allāh revealed the above verses instructing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Say to your wives, 'If you desire the life of this world and its adornments, then come forward. I shall grant you a generous provision and separate from you (divorce you) in a cordial manner. And if you desire Allāh, His messenger and the home of the Hereafter, then Allāh has certainly prepared a grand reward for those of you who will do good deeds."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم acted according to this command and gave his wives the choice either to live patiently with him or be divorced. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم approached Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها first, telling her that he wished to propose something to her and she was not to reply until she

had consulted her parents. He then recited the two verses to her, giving her the choice.

She was an extremely intelligent woman and immediately said, "How can I consult my parents in this matter? I definitely desire Allāh, His Messenger and the home of the Hereafter." She also added that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should not inform the other wives of her reply. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her that Allāh had not sent him as a Prophet to give him difficulty nor to cause difficulty to others. He said that Allāh had sent him as a mentor and one who simplifies matters for people.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم posed the question to the other wives, they all replied in a similar manner. The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم face lit up when each wife chose to remain with him and he very much appreciated it. When the 29th day passed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went to Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها. She asked, " O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! You swore not live with us for a complete month." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that the month consisted of 29 days. *["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 525/6, Bukhari v. 2 p. 705, Muslim p. 480 to 482]*

NOTE: A husband may hand over to his wife the right to divorce, allowing her to decide whether she wishes to be divorced. If he wishes, he may also retain the right to divorce and ask her whether she wants to be divorced. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم employed the second method, which is a form of consultation. However, certain commentators say that the words used in the verse may refer to either method.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave them a choice and they chose to remain with him. No divorce therefore took place. The four Imāms (*Scholars*) of Islāmic Jurisprudence are unanimous that a divorce will not be considered pronounced by a mere consultation of this sort.

According to "Hidāya", the canonical book of the Hanafi Madh'hab (*School of thought*), a woman has the choice of divorce if the husband instructs her to choose between divorce and remaining together. However, if the wife leaves the place or engages in some other work, she will lose the choice to divorce herself. The same applies when he hands over the right of divorce to her. If the woman replies that she chooses to do so, a Bā'in (*reversible*) divorce will take effect.

DOUBLING OF THE PUNISHMENT OR REWARD

Allāh states further, *"O wives of the Holy Prophet! If any of you perpetrates an act of foolishness, her punishment will be multiplied twice. This is simple for Allāh."* The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that "an act of foolishness" refers to any act that would cause inconvenience or difficulty to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This has also been reported in *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"* from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. Others have reported that it refers to any major sin that they may commit.

The doubling of punishment is because of the fact that people of a higher standing deserve greater punishment for their misdemeanours, just as the

Prophets عليهم السلام were reprimanded for even the slightest errors. A learned person will always be at greater fault than an ignorant person who perpetrates the same crime.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that a person once told Sayyidina Zainul Ābidīn رحمة الله عليه that he was forgiven because he was from the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم family. The saint become angry and said that he anticipated the same as Allāh had promised the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives, i.e. that they will receive double the reward for any good deed and double the punishment for any sin. He then recited the verses, *"O wives of the Holy Prophet! If any of you perpetrates an act of foolishness.. .And We have prepared for her a bountiful provision."* [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 21 p. 184*]

Allāh then addresses the wives further saying, *"Any of you who is obedient to Allāh and His messenger, and does good deeds, then We will grant her twice the reward. And We have prepared for her a bountiful provision."* Just as the sins of notable persons are more severe than the common people, so too are their good deeds even more acceptable to Allāh. The obedience of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives is also more acceptable to Allāh because it pleases the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The above incident occurred only once, after which the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remained content with their lot and never again asked for an increase in allowance or a better standard of living.

THE VIRTUE OF THE HOLY PROPHET'S صلى الله عليه وسلم WIVES

Allāh declares, *"O wives of the Holy Prophet! You are not like any other women."* Allāh had granted the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives a special status above the rest of women.

Allāh then advises them saying, *"If you fear Allāh then do not speak in lowered tones* (to strange men) *lest he in whose heart is a disease* (of hypocrisy) *should be enticed."* Such men will be infatuated with their sweet voices and continue making attempts to speak to them.

When it is necessary to speak to such men, Allāh advises women to *"speak in a befitting manner."* Their reply should be terse and concise so that the man is not tempted to prolong the conversation. Other commentators have interpreted *"speak in a befitting manner"* as engaging in Allāh's Dhikr and not speaking to anyone without necessity.

SPEAKING TO STRANGERS

The verse makes it clear that women are permitted to speak to strangers when the need is pressing. However, when they do speak to men who are not their Mahram, their voices should not be soft and alluring because this will create a desire within a man's heart. It is for this reason that women are not permitted to give the Adhān and are not permitted to raise their voices when saying the 'Talbiya' during Hajj.

THE COMMAND FOR WOMEN TO REMAIN WITHIN THEIR HOMES

Allāh addresses women further saying, *"Remain in your homes and do not make a display of yourselves as was the practice of the former period of ignorance."* The first command in this verse is to remain indoors and the second is not to make a spectacle of themselves by flaunting their bare heads, faces, necks and finery.

The *'former period of ignorance"* refers to the period before Islām, when women mixed freely with men in public. Certain commentators have mentioned that the *'former period of ignorance"* is mentioned in contrast to the latter period of ignorance to denote that the Muslims will soon plunge into a state of moral decadence resembling that of the pre-Islāmic era. Allāh commands the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives to remain within their homes at all times and, when they are forced to leave their homes, they should emerge with the proper attire {observing the laws of Hijāb (*veil*)}. Although the verse addresses the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it applies equally to all Muslim women.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A woman is an object of concealment. When she emerges from her home, then Devil *(Shaytān)* stares at her." [*"Mishkāt" p. 269*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once saw men and women walking together on the street. He addressed the women saying, "O women! Walk behind the men. It is not permissible for you walk on the centre of the road. Walk on the sides of the road." After this address, the women walked so much on the sides that their clothing used to get caught in the walls of the houses along the Street. [Abu Dawūd]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that every eye fornicates (by looking at non-Mahram members of the opposite sex). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also added that the woman who applies perfume and then passes by a gathering is just like an prostitute. [*"Mishkāt" p. 96*]

Allāh advises further when He says, *"Establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and obey Allāh and His messenger."* Although these injunctions are incumbent on every Muslim male and female, Allāh specifically commands the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives with these so that they do not think that they are absolved from these obligations because of their association with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"Allāh only wishes to rid you of filth, O members of the household, and to purify you thoroughly." Commentators mention that 'filth" refers to acts of sin and disobedience. Others maintain that it refers to unbecoming character traits like miserliness, greed, pride, etc. Other commentators mention that *"rid you of filth"* refers to removing all evil and unseemly traits, while *"purify you thoroughly"* refers to instilling virtuous qualities in them.

In the above verse, Allāh Himself declares the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives to be innocent of immoral behaviour. It will therefore only be a fool who will attribute such behaviour to them. The insolent Rawāfidh claim that most of the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم, including all the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم

wives [with the exception of Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها] left the fold of Islām after the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم demise. These people seem to have enmity for the Qur'ān itself.

The Rawāfidh claim that *"members of the household"* refers only to Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها, Sayyidina Hasan رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Husain رضى الله عنه. Although these illustrious souls are also members of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم family, the apparent context of the Qur'ānic verses clearly denote that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives are specifically referred to in this verse as *"members of the household."*

Unable to prove their fallacious belief, the Rawāfidh attempt to beguile the layman by saying that the verse addresses *"members of the household"* using a masculine pronoun. A drowning person will even cling to a blade of grass in his desperation. Their hatred for the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives drive them to be oblivious of so many other Qur'ānic verses where Allāh makes reference to women using a masculine pronoun.

An example of this is the verse where Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام addresses his wife using a masculine pronoun, asking her to wait while he goes to the fire to find guidance. A verse of Surah Hūd quotes the angels using a masculine pronoun when addressing Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام wife. These verses denote that it is proper to address women using a plural masculine pronoun as a token of respect.

Besides the above verse, Allāh also declares the purity and innocence of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives in Surah Nūr when says, *"Pure women are for pure men and pure men are for pure women. These people are innocent of what the slanderers say. Theirs is forgiveness and a bounteous reward."* This verse makes it clear that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives were chaste, just as he was chaste.

Basing their argument on a single note of pronouns, the Rawāfidh do not even see that the verse in question is linked to the previous verses, where Allāh distinctly addresses the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives and even uses plural feminine pronouns.

With regard to the above verse *(i.e. "Allāh only wishes...")*, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentions that it was revealed with specific reference to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives. Sayyidina Ikrima رضى الله عنه made an announcement that he was prepared to enter into 'Mubāhala (*mutual imprecation to prove truth of one's poin*)' with any person to prove that the verse *"Allāh only wishes..."* was revealed with reference to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives. Even Sayyidina Urwa رضى الله عنه declared that the verse referred to them. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 21 p. 140*]

Tirmidhi has reported a hadith from Sayyidina Umar bin Abi Salamah رضى الله عنه, which mentions that the above verse was revealed while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in the company of Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنه (one of his wives). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then called for Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها and her two sons Sayyidina Hasan رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Husain رضى الله عنه, while Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه was sitting behind the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

When they arrived, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم draped his shawl over all four of them saying, "O Allāh! These are the members of my household, so rid them of filth and purify them thoroughly."

Thereupon Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها asked, *"O Allāh's Prophet! Am I not also from among them?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"You are as you are and upon good."* It appears from this hadith that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not regard his wives as *"members of the household."*

However, it is necessary that Muslims believe in every verse of the Qur'ān and also the Ahadīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. A Muslim cannot interpret any hadith in a manner that annuls the essence of any Qur'ānic verse. While the Rawāfidh do not care to uphold the authenticity of the Qur'ān (and even say that it was distorted), they are not concerned about abiding by this principle.

It would therefore be said that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives are also *"members of the household,"* just as Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها and their sons رضى الله عنهم were. According to another narration, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها, "You are my family." Another narration mentions that when she asked, "And me?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to her, "You too." [*Ibn Kathīr v. 3 p. 38415*]

There were other Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had regarded as members of his household even though they were not related to him. Of these was Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه, regarding whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Salmān is from among us, the members of the household." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said the same about Sayyidina Wāthila bin Athqa رضى الله عنه. If these people could be included in the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم household, why not his own wives?

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that the purport of *"members of the household"* varies. While in the hadith of Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها it refers to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم blood relatives, it also refers to all family members in a broader context (as in the verse).

"And remember the verses (of the Qur'ān) *and wisdom* [*i.e. the. teachings of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم] *recited in your homes."*

Commentators mention that this verse may be interpreted to mean that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives were to remember and learn the Qur'ān and his teachings for themselves. It may also be interpreted to mean that they should teach these to the Ummah.

Just as it is necessary to learn the teachings of the Qur'ān, it is imperative that the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also be studied and propagated because they elucidate the teachings of the Qur'ān. Many details like the times of Salāh and the Nisāb of Zakāh cannot be determined without the Ahadīth. One of the reasons for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم marrying many wives was so that they could teach the Ummah various aspects of domestic life, as they learnt from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"Indeed Allāh is Compassionate, Informed." Allāh was Compassionate enough to bless the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives with the honour of enjoying his

companionship and having the Qur'ān and Ahadīth recited in their homes. In gratitude, they were expected to carry out the best of deeds, about which Allāh is well informed.

إِنَّ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَٱلْمُسْلِمَٰتِ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ وَٱلْقَٰنِتِينَ وَٱلْقَٰنِتَٰتِ
وَٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ وَٱلصَّٰدِقَٰتِ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ وَٱلصَّٰبِرَٰتِ وَٱلْخَٰشِعِينَ وَٱلْخَٰشِعَٰتِ
وَٱلْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَٱلْمُتَصَدِّقَٰتِ وَٱلصَّٰٓئِمِينَ وَٱلصَّٰٓئِمَٰتِ وَٱلْحَٰفِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ
وَٱلْحَٰفِظَٰتِ وَٱلذَّٰكِرِينَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَٱلذَّٰكِرَٰتِ أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةً
وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

(35) The Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women, obedient men and obedient women, truthful men and truthful women, patient men and patient women, humble men and humble women, charitable men and charitable women, fasting men and fasting women, chaste men and chaste women, and men who remember Allāh in abundance and women who remember Allāh; Allāh has prepared forgiveness and an immense reward for them.

THE QUALITIES OF BELIEVING MEN AND WOMEN

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has written (*v. 3 p. 487*) that many narrations prove that the above verse was revealed in response to a question posed by Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها. She once said, "O Allāh's Holy Prophet! Men are often mentioned in the Qur'ān, while women are not." She was referring to the fact that the Qur'ān often used masculine pronouns and figures of speech when addressing the believers (*Mu'minīn*). Women were not specifically addressed in these verses, even though they were implied. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verse. [*Tirmidhi*]

"The Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women..." The term 'Muslim' generally refers to a person who practises the injunctions of Islām, while 'Mu'min' (believer) refers to the person who adheres to the beliefs of Islām. Although each term may be used for the other, each is mentioned separately to denote their importance.

"obedient men and obedient women..." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that this refers to Muslims who are always obedient to Allāh without failing in their duties to Him.

"truthful men and truthful women..." *i.e.* they are truthful in word and deed (sincere).

"patient men and patient women..." They patiently endure the adversities that afflict them in the course of their duties to Allāh.

"humble men and humble women... "Humility generally refers to the submission

of one's heart, but also extends to the limbs and all forms of worship. Such people are humble in all their dealings and do not possess any pride. They do not allow even their limbs to disobey Allāh and they refrain from sins. Details of this have been discussed in the commentary of verse 45 of Surah Baqarah and in the opening verses of Surah Mu'minūn (*Surah* 23).

"*charitable men and charitable women...* "This refers to spending in Zakāh, spending in optional charity causes, as well as spending on the poor, the orphans and relatives.

"*fasting men and fasting women...*" Fasting in Ramadhān is one of the foundational pillars of Islām. In verse 184 of Surah Baqarah, Allāh encourages optional fasting when He says, "*Whoever will do a good act of his own will, then surely this is better for him. And it is better for you that you fast, if you but knew.*" When a person fasts, his carnal passions are doused and Taqwa (*piety*) is inculcated in his heart.

"*chaste men and chaste women...*" Many sins are committed as a result of man's sexual desires. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports that the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضی الله عنهم once asked the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم about the factor that causes the greatest number of people to enter Hell. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "The mouth and the sexual organ." ["*Mishkāt*" *p. 412*]

Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'd رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Whoever can guarantee for me the safety of what is between his legs and what is between his lips, then I shall guarantee Heaven for him." [*Bukhari*]

Allāh says in Surah Ma'ārij, "*those who safeguard their private organs, save when it comes to their spouses and the slave women whom they possess. They will surely not be blamed with regard to (cohabiting with) these.*" [*Surah 70, verse 29-31*]

"*and men who remember Allāh in abundance and women who remember Allāh...*" Dhikr (remembrance) of Allāh is a great aspect of Islām. Salāh, which is the noblest of good deeds, is an embodiment of remembrance of Allāh (*Dhikr*) Allāh says in Surah Tā Hā, "*Establish Salāh for My remembrance.*" [*Surah 20, verse 14*]

A verse of Surah Ankabūt states, "*Without doubt, the remembrance of Allāh is greatest.*" Allāh says in Surah Jumu'ah reads, "*remember Allāh abundantly so that you may be successful.*" [*Surah 62, verse 10*]

More details pertaining to remembrance of Allāh (*Dhikr*) will (Insha Allāh) be mentioned in the commentary of a forthcoming verse where Allāh says, "*O you who believe! Remember Allāh in abundance*" (*verse 41 of this Surah*).

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضی الله عنه reports that someone once asked the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, "Which of Allāh' s servants are the best, will be closest to Him on the Day of Judgment (*Qiyāmah*) and enjoy the highest ranks?" The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "men who remember Allāh in abundance and women who remember Allāh." Thereupon, someone asked whether these people are even better than those who fight in Jihād. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied that they are even better than those who fight in Jihād until their swords break and they are spattered with blood. ["*Mishkāt*" *p. 198*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Busr رضی الله عنه reports that someone asked the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "The actions of Islām are numerous. Show me one action which I may continuously perform." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "(The action is that) your tongue remains moist with Allāh's remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*." [*Ibid*]

A believer *(Mu'min)* should always remain engaged in Allāh's remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* and abstain from frivolous and idle talk. A believer *(Mu'min)* should engage in various acts of remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* like recitation of the Qur'ān, reciting *"SubhānAllāh"*, *"Allāhu Akbar"*, etc.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "To say *'SubhānAllāh wal Hamdulillāh wa Lā Illāha IllAllāhu Allāhu Akbar'* is more beloved to me than everything upon which the sun rises."

The virtues of remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* have been mentioned in the commentary of verse 152 of Surah Baqara and verse 45 of Surah Ankabūt (*Surah 29*), where Allāh says, *"Verily Salāh forbids from obscenity and evil. Without doubt, the remembrance of Allāh is greatest."*

The various prayer's *(du'ā's)* reported in the Ahadīth for various occasions also form part of Allāh's remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*. In fact, remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* is one of the easiest acts of worship, which can be practised in all conditions and postures. People may also engage in remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* while they are busy in their occupations.

Allāh concludes the verse by announcing the reward He has in store for those who possess the above qualities. Allāh says, *"Allāh has prepared forgiveness and an immense reward for them."*

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ أَمْرًا أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ ٱلْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَن يَعْصِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًا مُّبِينًا ﴿36﴾ وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِىٓ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ وَتُخْفِى فِى نَفْسِكَ مَا ٱللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى ٱلنَّاسَ وَٱللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَن تَخْشَىٰهُ ۖ فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَٰكَهَا لِكَىْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِىٓ أَزْوَٰجِ أَدْعِيَآئِهِمْ إِذَا قَضَوْا۟ مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿37﴾ مَّا كَانَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِىِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُۥ ۖ سُنَّةَ ٱللَّهِ فِى ٱلَّذِينَ خَلَوْا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَّقْدُورًا ﴿38﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُبَلِّغُونَ رِسَٰلَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَخْشَوْنَهُۥ وَلَا يَخْشَوْنَ أَحَدًا إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿39﴾

(36) It is not for the believing men and women to have any choice in their affairs when Allāh and His messenger have decreed a matter. The one who disobeys Allāh and His messenger has certainly deviated in a clear manner. (37) When you said to the one upon whom Allāh had bestowed His grace, and upon whom

you had bestowed your grace, "Keep your wife and fear Allāh." You concealed in your heart what Allāh was to disclose. And you feared the people, whereas Allāh is more worthy of being feared. So when Zaid fulfilled his need from her, We married her to you so that there may not be any constraint on the believers with regard to the wives of their adopted sons, when they (the adopted sons) have fulfilled their need from them. Allāh's command will always come to pass. (38) There is no constraint upon the Holy Prophet with regard to what Allāh has ordained for him. Such was the practice of Allāh among those who passed before. Allāh 's command is a decreed affair. (39) Those who propagate Allāh 's messages, who fear Him and do not fear anyone but Allāh. Allāh suffices as One who takes reckoning.

THE STORY OF SAYYIDINA ZAID BIN HĀRITHA رضى الله عنه

Many Arabs used to kidnap children and take them to distant places, where none recognised them. They would then sell them as slaves. Sayyidina Zaid bin Hāritha رضى الله عنه was travelling with his mother to her parents home when some bandits kidnapped him and took him to Makkah, where they sold him as a slave. He was eight years old at the time. Sayyidina Hakīm bin Hizām bin Khuwaylid رضى الله عنه bought him as a gift for his paternal aunt, Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها. He paid 400 Dirhams for the boy.

When Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها married the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, she presented Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه as a gift for her husband. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم adopted him as a son and people began referring to him as Zaid bin Muhammad (Zaid, the son of Muhammad) because it was customary among the Arabs to refer to an adopted child as the real child of the adoptive father.

When Sayyidina Zaid's رضى الله عنه father learnt after much investigation that his abducted son was sold as a slave in Makkah, he arrived in Makkah to purchase his freedom. When he approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and explained that he wished to purchase his son's freedom, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that he may take the boy for free if the boy agreed to accompany him. However, the boy should be left to remain with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم if he chose to do so.

Exuberant, the father said that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had exceeded the bounds of kindness because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reserved the right to retain the boy. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه if he recognised the two persons who came to fetch him, he immediately responded by saying that they were his father and uncle.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "You know them and you know me because you have spent time in my company. You now have the choice to join them or to remain with me." Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه chose to remain with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. His father said, "It is tragic that you prefer a life of slavery to freedom and another person to your father, uncle, kith and kin." Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه replied, "I have seen such qualities in my master and I simply cannot prefer any other to him."

This episode transpired before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced his Prophethood. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced that he was a Prophet, Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه was one of the first to accept Islām. According to certain Ulema (*scholars*), Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه was the first male to accept Islām.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه to his slave, Sayyidah Barka رضى الله عنها, famously known as Ummu Ayman رضى الله عنها. She was of African origin and formed part of the inheritance which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received from the estate of his father or (according to others) from the estate of his mother. It was she who brought the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم back to Makkah from Abwa after his mother passed away there when he was only six years old. Ummu Ayman رضى الله عنها gave birth to Sayyidina Usama bin Zaid رضى الله عنه, who was commonly referred to as "the beloved of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم".

People always referred to Sayyidina Zaid bin Häritha رضى الله عنه as Zaid bin (the son of) Muhammad. However, they stopped doing so when Allāh revealed the verse, "Allāh has also not made your adopted sons your own sons... Call them by their fathers. This is more just in the sight of your Lord." [*Surah Ahzāb (33), verses 4,5*]

SAYYIDINA ZAID رضى الله عنه MARRIES SAYYIDAH ZAINAB BINT JAHSH رضى الله عنها AND LATER DIVORCED HER

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then married Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه to his cousin [the daughter of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم paternal aunt], Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها. She accepted the proposal on the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم recommendation, but the couple could never adapt to each other. When Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه wanted to divorce her, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him to maintain the marriage. However, when matters came to a head, he finally divorced her.

Allāh then commanded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to marry her, when He revealed the verse, *"So when Zaid fulfilled his need from her, We married her to you...* .After completing the Iddah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent a marriage proposal to her via Sayyidah Zainab رضى الله عنها, but she requested time to consider the matter. However, when Allāh revealed the above verse, the marriage was contracted and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was legally married to her. It is for this reason that she boasted to the other wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "Your guardians married you, whereas Allāh Himself married me." [*"Isti'ab" and "Isābah"*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها initially refused to marry Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم brought the proposal to her. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised her to marry him, she declared that she required time to think it over. As she considered the issue, Allāh revealed the verse saying, *"It is not for the believing men and women to have any choice in their affairs when Allāh and His messenger have decreed a matter. The one who disobeys Allāh and His messenger has certainly deviated in a clear manner."* When this verse was revealed, Sayyidah

Zainab رضى الله عنها said, "I do not wish to disobey Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. I agree to marry Zaid."

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 22 p. 23*) and Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه write (*v. 3 p. 489*) that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم brought Sayyidina Zaid's رضى الله عنه proposal to Sayyidah Zainab رضى الله عنها, she said that he did not suit her because of her higher social standing and lineage. Her brother, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Jahsh رضى الله عنه echoed her feelings. They felt like this because although Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه was an Arab, he was a slave and did not belong to the Quraysh. However, they both accepted the marriage happily when the above verse was revealed.

Although the verse may have been revealed in relation to a specific incident, the purport is general and applies to all believers *(Mu'minīn)* during every age. The verse makes it clear that Muslims are obliged to accept Allāh's laws and to practise them. The behaviour of present day Muslims contravenes this principle when they act contrary to the teachings of the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth.

"The one who disobeys Allāh and His messenger has certainly deviated in a clear manner." People initially omit the Sunnah and other optional acts, after which they begin to neglect the Compulsories and Farādh (*Obligations*). Eventually Satan *(Shaytān)* persuades them to discard even their Imān. It is therefore necessary that every aspect of religion is followed properly.

SAYYIDAH ZAINAB BINT JAHSH رضى الله عنها IS MARRIED TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

"When you said to the one upon whom Allāh had bestowed His grace, and upon whom you had bestowed your grace, 'Keep your wife and fear Allāh." The verse refers to the advice the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave to Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had bestowed his grace upon Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه by freeing him from slavery and taking him in his care and compassion.

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further when He says, *"You concealed in your heart what Allāh was to disclose."* Certain commentators (including the author of "Jalālain") write that the matter which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم concealed in his heart was his desire to marry Sayyidah Zainab رضى الله عنها when Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه divorced her. However, this interpretation does not behove the status of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The correct interpretation is that Allāh had already informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه would divorce her, after which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to marry her. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not want to disclose this matter and still advised Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه to keep her in his marriage. As a result of this, Allāh mildly chided the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the verse.

THE PERMISSIBILITY OF MARRYING THE FORMER WIFE OF ONE'S ADOPTED SON

Since the Arabs regarded an adopted son as one's own, they regarded it Harām (*unlawful*) for a person to marry his adopted son's former wife. Therefore

the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم feared that some people would object to such a marriage. However, when Allāh revealed the verse *"Allāh has also not made your adopted sons your own sons...* 'There remained no doubt that a man was allowed to marry his adopted son's former wife. When Allāh has declared something lawful, no objection to it will be considered.

To eradicate all doubts from people's minds, it was necessary that the injunction be pronounced verbally and practically by the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم marriage to Sayyidah Zainab رضى الله عنها. Allāh mildly chided the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for his apprehension by saying, *"And you feared the people, whereas Allāh is more worthy of being feared."*

"So when Zaid fulfilled his need from her (by divorcing her), We married her to you so that there may not be any constraint on the believers with regard to the wives of their adopted sons, when they (the adopted sons) have fulfilled their need from them." Therefore, the Ummah need not feel difficult to marry the former wives of their adopted sons once the precedent has been set.

"Allāh 's command will always come to pass." Allāh had already decreed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should marry Sayyidah Zainab رضى الله عنها. It was for this reason that the divorce was inevitable and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to practically demonstrate the permissibility of such a marriage.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها mentioned that if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could hide any part of revelation, he would certainly have hid the verse *"When you said to the one upon whom Allāh had bestowed His grace..."* [*Tirmidhi*]. This is because Allāh chides the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this verse.

"There is no constraint upon the Holy Prophet with regard to what Allāh has ordained for him." None can hold the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم responsible for any of the injunctions that Allāh has issued because they did not stem from his personal feelings. Therefore, none has the right to accuse the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of anything.

"Such was the practice of Allāh among those who passed before." Allāh has also ordained many permissible things for the previous Prophets عليهم السلام, which they practised without guilt and fear of people's accusations. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married a woman who was Halāl (*permissible*) for him.

"Allāh 's command is a decreed affair." Whatever Allāh wills will certainly take place. All Allāh's commands are practicable and constitute the Shari'ah. None can question them.

Describing *"those who passed before,"* Allāh says that they were *"Those who propagate Allāh 's messages, who fear Him and do not fear anyone but Allāh."* The Prophets عليهم السلام ceaselessly propagated Allāh's message and did not falter when they met opposition. Allāh will deal with their opponents on the Day of Qiyāmah (*resurrection*) because *"Allāh suffices as One who takes reckoning."*

SOME PERTINENT NOTES

NOTE: Compatibility between a man and a woman is necessary in the Shari'ah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told Sayyidina Ali رضى

رضی اللہ عنہ that the following three things should never be delayed:

1. The performance of Salāh when the time sets in.
2. The burial of a corpse when it is ready.
3. The marriage of a solitary woman when a compatible match is found. [*Tirmidhi p. 52*]

A man and woman should be compatible in aspects like slavery and freedom (i.e. both should be free or both should be Salves). Both of them should also be Muslims and of equal religious sentiments. There are other factors that also need to be considered so that the families of either party have no cause to object to the marriage. The details of this can be read up in the relevant books of Islāmic jurisprudence.

This explains the hesitancy on the part of Sayyidah Zainab رضی اللہ عنہا and her brother when Sayyidina Zaid رضی اللہ عنہ sent his marriage proposal. However, the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم did not consider their reluctance because there are times when compatibility may be overruled by other factors.

The marriage and subsequent divorce needed to take place because Allāh has already decreed that Sayyidah Zainab رضی اللہ عنہا be married to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم after being divorced from Sayyidina Zaid رضی اللہ عنہ. This was necessary to demonstrate an injunction to humanity until the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم did not merely offer advice when he told Sayyidah Zainab رضی اللہ عنہا to marry Sayyidina Zaid رضی اللہ عنہ, but it was a command. It was for this reason that Allāh revealed the verse saying, *"The one who disobeys Allāh and His messenger has certainly deviated in a clear manner."*

It should also be noted that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم has a greater relationship with the believers *(Mu'minīn)* than the members of their own families and their guardians. Allāh says in Surah Ahzāb, *"The Holy Prophet* صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *has a greater relationship with the believers than even their own selves...* [Surah 33, verse 6]

The command of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم cannot be disobeyed even though a person's parents, relatives, or even a king has to issue a command against that of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم.

NOTE: *"And you feared the people whereas Allāh is more worthy of being feared."* This part of the verse emphasises that people must act only to please Allāh, irrespective of what people have to say. It has become common nowadays that people participate in certain un-Islāmic marriage and funeral functions merely because they fear that people will be offended if they do not. They claim that people also have to be satisfied. Such an attitude is hypocritical to the claim of belief *(Imān)*. One can well imagine the gravity of the situation when the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم was chided for something that was not even Harām (*unlawful*).

If a deed is praiseworthy, but may lead to people getting an incorrect

notion, it should be avoided when the Shari'ah does not demand that it be carried out. An example of this is when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها that he would have reconstructed the Kābah according to the original design of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام if the Quraysh were not new to Islām. He feared that people may object to the fact that he is demolishing the Kābah. Therefore, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not do as he desired since he was not commanded to do so.

NOTE: Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه enjoys the special privilege that he is the only Sahabi (*Companion*) whose name appears in the Qur'ān. When people stopped calling him Zaid bin Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, he lost a privilege, but Allāh compensated for his loss by including his name in the Qur'ān, which will be recited by people until Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. Since every letter of the Qur'ān earns the reciter a minimum of ten rewards, the word 'Zaid' will earn a person at least thirty rewards.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also accorded him the privilege of appointing him as leader of military expeditions. He was martyred during the battle of Mauta in the 8th year after the Hijrah. He was 55 years of age at that time and the Amīr (leader) of the army. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also used to appoint him as the head of Madinah when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to leave. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also appointed his son, Sayyidina Usama bin Zaid رضى الله عنه as the Amīr of an expedition before his demise. After the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed away, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه dispatched this expedition.

مَّا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَآ أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

(40) Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is not the father of any men among you, but he is Allāh's messenger and the seal of all the Prophets. Allāh has knowledge of all things.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS THE LAST PROPHET

The above verse makes it clear that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not the biological father of any grown man. The general purport of this verse disqualifies Sayyidina Zaid bin Hāritha رضى الله عنه as well. This means that no man stands to inherit from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The word *"men"* has been used because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did father four daughters, all of whom married in his lifetime. In fact, all except Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها even passed away during the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم lifetime. Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها passed away six months after her father صلى الله عليه وسلم. The word *"men"* also precludes the sons that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fathered because they all passed away in childhood before growing up to be men.

Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not the biological father of any men, he still remains the spiritual father of the entire Ummah. It is therefore incumbent that every Muslim respects and honours the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to the highest degree possible. The fact that he is the spiritual father to so many people throughout the world until Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* is a much greater privilege that merely being the biological father of a few men.

The verse also makes it clear that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the final Prophet to be sent to the world. Whereas the previous Prophets عليهم السلام were sent only as guides to a particular nation or community, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is Allāh's Prophet to every man and Jinn to be born until Qiyāmah (*Resurrection day*). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was both a Rasūl (*messenger*) and a Prophet (a Rasūl is one who brings a new Shari'ah). Therefore, while the verse announces that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the final Prophet, it also announces that fact that he was the final Rasūl.

Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"We have only sent you to the whole of mankind as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. But most people do not know."* [*Surah 34, verse 28*]

THOSE WHO DENY THAT THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS THE FINAL HOLY PROPHET ACTUALLY REFUTE THE QUR'ĀN AND NO LONGER REMAIN MUSLIMS

Whoever claims to be a Prophet after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is a liar and a disbeliever. So too are those who believe this to be true. This is so because they refute the explicit teaching of the Qur'ān and the numerous authentic Ahadīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

THE RECITATION OF "KHĀTIMUN NABIYYĪN"

According to the authenticated recitation of Imām Āsim رحمة الله عليه, the arabic word in the above verse is "Khātamun Nabiyyīn," (translated above as *"seal of all Prophets"*) whereas the other Imāms (*leaders*) of Qirāt recite the word as "Khātimun Nabiyyīn" (which denotes someone who terminates something). The two words vary only in a single vowel, but the essential meaning of both remains the same. Both words denote that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the last of all the Holy Prophets.

All the modes of Qirāīt (Qur'ānic recitation) are authentic and rejecting any one of them will constitute disbelief. This discussion has been included here because some people distort the meaning of the verse by saying that "Khātamun Nabiyyīn" means 'the best of all Holy Prophets.' In this manner they wish to justify their rejection of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as the final Holy Prophet of Allāh.

Upon the bidding and bribery of the Christians in the 18th century, a person from Panjāb called Qādiani claimed to be a Prophet. The British Christians used him to achieve their own ulterior motives because he declared Jihād to be an abrogated command of the Shari'ah. He tendered various incoherent interpretations for the verse that declares the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be the final Prophet, and even classified various categories of Prophets.

His followers still exist today and are all tutored by the disbelievers. Any person who denies a clear statement of the Qur'ān cannot be called a Muslim.

Allāh concludes the verse by saying, *"Allāh has knowledge of all things."* This part of the verse sounds a warning to those who oppose the teachings of the Qur'ān and believe in another Prophet after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They should note that while they may escape with their fallacious beliefs in this world, they will never escape Allāh in the Hereafter.

THE RETURN OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام WILL NOT NULLIFY THE FACT THAT THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS THE SEAL OF ALL PROHETS

Many indisputable Ahadīth and verses of the Qur'ān foretell the return of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام to this world before Qiyāmah, when he will slay Dajjāl. This is the unanimous belief of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamā'ah (*followers of Sunnah*).

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام will not be made a Prophet after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because he was already a Prophet عليه السلام before ascending to the heavens. He will also not introduce another religion or Shari'ah, but will follow the religion of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and he will urge people to do the same. He will live, marry and pass away among the Muslims. His advent will therefore not impact upon the finality of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Prophethood.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام will abrogate the Jizya (*atonement*), but the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has already informed us about it proves that the abrogation will also be in conformity to the Religion of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāma Suyuti's رحمة الله عليه book about the descent of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, and many Ahadīth in the books of Bayhaqi and Tabrāni explicitly mention that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام will follow the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Shari'ah. He will rule by the code of Islām and pass judgement accordingly.

THE FALLACIES OF THE QĀDIANIS

Those adhering to the Qādiani sect claim that the door of Prophethood has not been shut because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has foretold the coming of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Therefore, they claim that the person they follow is actually Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. They fail to perceive the simple fact that the Qur'ān repeatedly declares that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is the son of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, whereas every person, including Qādiani's followers, knows that Qādiani's mother was not called Maryam.

They also say that the coming of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام proves that the chain of the Prophets has not terminated. The reply to this has already been given. It should also be noted that since Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام will follow the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Shari'ah, he will not abrogate Jihād, as Qādiani did. It is clear that Qadiani could neither have been another Prophet, nor could he have been Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُصَلِّى عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَـٰٓئِكَتُهُۥ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَـٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَكَانَ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿٤٣﴾ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهُۥ سَلَـٰمٌ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٤٤﴾

(41) O you who believe! Remember Allāh in abundance... (42) .... And glorify Him morning and evening. (43) It is He Who showers mercy on you, and so do His Angels (pray for your forgiveness), so that He may remove you from a multitude of darkness into light. He is always Most Merciful unto the believers. (44) The day when they will meet Him, their greeting will be "Salām." And He has prepared for them a generous reward.

THE BELIEVERS ARE COMMANDED TO REMEMBER ALLĀH IN ABUNDANCE AND ARE GRANTED THE TIDINGS OF MERCY FROM ALLĀH AND HIS ANGELS

"Allāh says, "*O you who believe! Remember Allāh in abundance, and glorify Him morning and evening.*" Commentators say that the verse denotes that people should engage in the remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* of Allāh at all times. Others say that "*morning*" refers to the day, while "*evening*" refers to the night. Allāh has commanded that remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* take place at the beginning of the day and at the beginning of the night so that the rest of the day and night may be passed in the same way.

THE VIRTUES OF REMEMBRANCE OF ALLĀH *(DHIKR)*

Allāh's remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* is a great act of worship and should be practised at all times. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, "*When you have completed your Salāh, remember Allāh standing, sitting and* (reclining) *on your sides* (i.e. while lying down)." These are basically the only three postures of man and remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* must be practised in each of them.

Muslim (*v. 1 p. 24*) reports that Qiyāmah (*dooms day*) will take place only when there is none to take Allāh's name in this world. This proves that remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* is the lifeblood of this world, without which the universe will be destroyed. It is also the soul of other acts of worship. In fact, Salāh, the foundational act of worship, is based on remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*. Allāh says in Surah TāHā, "*establish Salāh for My remembrance* (for My Dhikr)." [*Surah 20, verse 14*]

A verse of Surah Ra'd also mentiors that remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* develops tranquillity and contentment in the heart. Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The example of one who remembers Allāh is like that of a living being, while the example of one who does not remember Allāh is like that of a dead being." [*Bukhari*]

This hadith makes it evident that true living beings are those who engage in Allāh's remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* at all times, and not those who merely eat, drink and engage in worldly activities.

Another hadith mentions that the people of Heaven will regret the moments that they spent without engaging in remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr).*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the gathering without Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* and salutations upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will be a source of regret to the participants on the Day of Qiyāmah (*dooms day*). Allāh may punish them if He wills or He may forgive them. If any person lies down without engaging in any remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*, his act of lying down will be a source of regret for him on the Day of Qiyāmah (*dooms day*). In a similar manner, a person will regret his walking if it was bereft of Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr).*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that the gathering bereft of Allāh's remembrance and salutations upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will be a source of regret to the participants on the Day of Qiyāmah (*Resurrection*), even though they will enter Heaven on account of their good deeds. [*Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 2 p. 409/4 10*]

An intelligent person is he who does not waste a single moment. He uses every second to engage in various forms of remembrance and manages his worldly activities as swiftly as possible so that he may return to remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr).*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that one must not engage in much talk, unless the talk is Allāh's remembrance. This is so because excessive talking hardens the heart, and the hard-hearted person is the most distant from Allāh. [*Tirmidhi*]

Ummul Mu'minīn {*(The Spiritual) mother of the believers*} Sayyidah Ummu Habībah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Everything a person says will be an encumbrance for him, except enjoining good, forbidding evil and Allāh's remembrance." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Busr رضى الله عنه reports that a villager once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who is the best person. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that the best person is the one whose life is long and whose deeds are good. The person then inquired about the best deed. The reply was, "That you leave this world while you tongue is moist with Allāh's Dhikr." [*Ibid*]

Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"establish Salāh for My remembrance (Dhikr)."* The Adhān and Iqāmah before Salāh are forms of remembrance. So too is the reply to the Adhān, the du'ās of wudhu (*prays of ablution*), and all the words recited in the Salāh. These words praise Allāh, glorify Him and express His purity.

The tongue, together with the other limbs of the body, all engage in Allāh's remembrance while performing Salāh. As the limbs lower themselves before Allāh in the various postures, the tongue continues to praise and glorify Him. The submission of all the limbs and the lowering of the head to the ground indicate one's humility before Allāh.

Allāh says in Surah Jumu'ah, *"When the (Jumu'ah) Salāh has been completed then disperse in the land, seek from Allāh's bounty and remember Allāh abundantly so that you may be successful."* [*Surah 62, verse 10*]

ALLĀH REMEMBERS THOSE WHO REMEMBER HIM

Allāh says in verse 152 of Surah Baqarah, *"So remember Me and I will remember you. Be grateful to Me and be not ungrateful."*

It is reported in a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم quotes Allāh as saying, "I am with My servant when He remembers Me and engages His tongue with the recitation of My name." [*Bukhari, from Abu Hurayra* رضى الله عنه]

Another hadith reports the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to have said, "Allāh says that I am with My servant when he remembers Me. When he remembers me in privacy, then I remember him likewise. When he remembers Me in a gathering, then I remember him in a nobler gathering i.e. of angels. [*Bukhari, from Sayyidina Abu Hurayra* رضى الله عنه]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has reported 'from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that Allāh has stipulated a limit for every act of worship that He has ordained. Allāh has also excused certain people from these acts of worship because of their specific conditions. However, Allāh's remembrance is such an act of worship that has no limitations in terms of quantity and time. It has no fixed pattern of standing or sitting, neither is one required to have wudhu (*ablution*). Allāh commands that people abundantly engage in His remembrance at all times and in all situations, be they travelling or at home, ill or healthy, on land or at sea. The only excuse a person can have for not making remembrance is when he loses his sanity or consciousness.

"It is He Who showers mercy on you, and so do His Angels..." The Arabic word 'yusallī' (translated above as *"showers mercy")* may be attributed to Allāh, as well as the angels. When it is attributed to Allāh, it would mean that Allāh's showers His special mercy and grace upon a person. When it is attributed to the angels, it means that they seek forgiveness on behalf of a person and invoke Allāh's mercy for him.

Allāh then says that the purpose of Allāh's mercy and the supplications of the angels is to *"remove you from a multitude of darkness* (and bring you) *into light. He is always Most Merciful unto the believers."* Allāh's mercy abounds to the believers *(Mu'minīn)* in both worlds. In this world, it saves them from disbelief, polytheism *(shirk)* and Bid'ah (*innovations*), while also providing for their material needs. Then, in the Hereafter, it will secure for them eternal peace and tranquillity.

"The day when they will meet Him, their greeting will be 'Salām." Allāh will greet them with 'Salām' (peace) when they meet Him. Allāh says in Surah YāSīn, *"They will have a greeting of peace from the Most Merciful Lord."* [*Surah 36, verse 58*]

Verses 23 and 24 of Surah Ra'd (Surah 13) read: *"And the angels shall enter upon them from every door saying, 'Peace be upon you because of the patience that you exercised. How blissful is the outcome of the Hereafter!"*

Certain commentators have mentioned that the angels shall greet a believer (*Mu'min*) with Salām when they claim his soul. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

"And He has prepared for them a generous reward." Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه mentions that this verse refers to Heaven and all the bounties there. All of this

will be presented to a person with great honour.

(45) O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! We have certainly sent you as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. (46) And as a caller to Allāh by His command and an illuminating lantern. (47) Convey glad tidings to the believers that theirs will be a great bounty from their Lord. (48) Do not follow the disbelievers and the hypocrites, ignore their harassment and rely only on Allāh. Allāh suffices as a Helper.

THE NOBLE ATTRIBUTES OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Allāh says, *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! We have certainly sent you as a witness..."* Addressing the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Thus We have made you such a group that is moderate in nature so that you may be witnesses over the people and the messenger a witness over you."* [*Surah 2, verse 143*]

Allāh states in Surah Nisā, *"How will it be when We shall bring forth from every nation a witness and call you* [*O Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم] *to witness over all of them?"* [*Surah 4, verse 41*]

The concluding verse of Surah Hajj states, *"So that the messenger be a witness over you, and that you be witnesses over mankind."* [*Surah 22, verse 78*]

The details of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم testimony on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* have been discussed in the commentaries of the above verses of Surah Nisā and Surah Baqarah.

Allāh says further that he has sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as *"a bearer of glad tidings and a warner."* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed on to the believers *(Mu'minīn)* the glad tidings that they will be admitted into Heaven, and also warned the disbelievers and sinners that they may have to suffer in Hell.

Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as *"a bearer of glad tidings and a warner"* to all nations and communities, as He says in Surah Saba, *"We have only sent you to the whole of mankind as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. But most people do not know."* [*Surah 34, verse 28*]

It is incumbent that people of all religions and denominations follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says in verse 19 of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah 5*), *"O People of the Book! Indeed Our messenger has come to you, expounding to you at a time when the succession of messengers has been paused, so that you do not say, 'There has not come to us a bearer of glad tidings, nor any warner!' Undoubtedly there has come to you a bearer of glad tidings and a warner! Allāh has power over all things."*

Sayyidina Atā bin Yasār رحمة الله عليه reports that he once met Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr bin Ās رضى الله عنه and asked him about the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Torah. He replied that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was described in the Torah just as he is described in the Qur'ān, i.e. "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! We have certainly sent you as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner." In addition to this, the Torah mentions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is a protector of the unlettered people (Arabs). Allāh also says to him in the Torah, "You are my bondsman and I have named you 'Mutawakkil' (i.e. one who relies on Allāh). You are not foul mouthed and harsh, and do not make a noise in the marketplaces. You do not avenge evil with evil, but forgive and overlook. I will not call you back until you have straightened a crooked nation, who will say *'Lā ilāha IllAllāh'*. This will open their blind eyes, their deaf ears, and shatter the veil upon their hearts."

"And (We have sent you) *as a caller to Allāh by His command..."* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم invited all of mankind and the Jinn towards believing in Allāh's oneness (Tauhīd), urging them to worship only Him. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم endured great pains and hardships in propagating oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, the responsibility of which has been passed on to his Ummah. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"There should be a group from you who invite towards good, enjoin right and forbid from evil. These are indeed the successful ones."* [*Surah* 3, *verse* 104]

Allāh further describes the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as *"an illuminating lantern* (who leads people out of the darkness of disbelief and into the light of Islām)." Just as many lanterns can be lit from one lantern, many hearts were illuminated by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, each of them illuminating a large number of others. Allāh did not describe the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a sun because the radiance of the sun disappears at night and is not perpetuated by a transfer of the light to other bodies.

Allāh then commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so *"Convey glad tidings to the believers that theirs will be a great bounty from their Lord."* They will be saved from disbelief and polytheism *(shirk)* in this world and admitted into Heaven in the Hereafter.

"Do not follow the disbelievers and the hypocrites, ignore their harassment and rely only on Allāh. Allāh suffices as a Helper." Because of their opposition to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم message, the disbelievers presented all kinds of obstacles. Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to ignore them and not to compromise Islām in any way. Allāh will soon settle the score with them and take them to task for their persecution.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَـٰتِ ثُمَّ طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَمَسُّوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُّونَهَا ۖ فَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ وَسَرِّحُوهُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾

(49) O you who believe! When you marry believing women and then divorce them before touching them, there will be no waiting period (Iddah) incumbent

on them for you, which you will have to count. Grant them a provision and part from them in a most beautiful manner.

CERTAIN LAWS OF THE IDDAH

The laws of marriage, divorce, maintenance, Iddah, etc have been discussed at length in the Qur'ān, the Ahadīth and the books of Islāmic jurisprudence. Although divorce has been permitted by the Shari'ah as a last resort, it has been referred to as *"the worst of all permissible things"*.

A woman may leave the marriage of her husband under the following circumstances:

- *He dies.*
- *He pronounces a divorce that is 'Bā'in.'*
- *He pronounces a divorce that is 'Mughallaza.'*
- *He pronounces a divorce that is 'Raj'ī' and does not take her back before the expiry of her Iddah.*

The Arabic word 'Iddah' literally means 'to count.' It has been named thus because the divorced or widowed woman has to 'count' the menstruation cycles or months to complete her waiting period. It is only after this Iddah that she can remarry.

If a man divorces his wife after the marriage has been consummated, and:

- *If she menstruates, she will have to complete an Iddah for the period of three menstruation cycles.*
- *If she is pregnant, her Iddah will terminate as soon as the child is born.*
- *If she does not menstruate and is not expecting, her Iddah will last for three months.*

If a man passed away, and:

- *If his wife was expecting, her Iddah will terminate upon the delivery of the child.*
- *If she was not expecting, her Iddah will last for four months and ten days, irrespective of whether she menstruates or not, and irrespective of whether the marriage was consummated or not.*

However, if a woman was divorced before the marriage could be consummated, there will be no Iddah for her. She may remarry immediately after the divorce is pronounced. This is explained in the above verse. The verse also instructs the husband to give her "a provision."

The sum of this "provision" has been stipulated in Sūrah Baqarah, where Allāh says, *"If you divorce them before touching them and you have stipulated the dowry, then half of it* (shall be due), *unless the women or those possessing the tie of marriage forgo it."* [*Surah 2, verse 237*]

Therefore, the husband has to give her half of the stipulated dowry upon separation. However, if no dowry has been agreed upon. He will have to give her a set of clothing. This set of clothing is known as 'mutā' in the definition of the Shari'ah. The 'muTā' has to consist of at least three garments. The first should be equivalent to a sheet that drapes the entire body from head to toe. The second should be a large scarf, and the third should be something like a cloak, which covers the body properly.

If a woman was divorced after consummation, but the dowry was never specified, she will receive the dowry known as 'mithal' i.e. the amount of dowry usually received by the women of her family. Of course, if a dowry has been agreed upon in the above case, the woman will have to be paid the full amount after divorce (if she did not receive it already).

According to the Hanafi and Hambali schools of jurisprudence, a marriage will be regarded as consummated even if the couple did not physically engage in cohabitation, but were left in privacy for a period in which they could have cohabited.

Allāh then says, *"part from them in a most beautiful manner.* When the couple have to leave each other, the husband must not utter any offensive words, nor deprive the wife of her rights. He should also not take back anything that he had given her before.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ إِنَّآ أَحۡلَلۡنَا لَكَ أَزۡوَٰجَكَ ٱلَّٰتِيٓ ءَاتَيۡتَ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتۡ يَمِينُكَ
مِمَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمِّكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمَّٰتِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَٰلَٰتِكَ ٱلَّٰتِي
هَاجَرۡنَ مَعَكَ وَٱمۡرَأَةً مُّؤۡمِنَةً إِن وَهَبَتۡ نَفۡسَهَا لِلنَّبِيِّ إِنۡ أَرَادَ ٱلنَّبِيُّ أَن يَسۡتَنكِحَهَا
خَالِصَةً لَّكَ مِن دُونِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَۗ قَدۡ عَلِمۡنَا مَا فَرَضۡنَا عَلَيۡهِمۡ فِيٓ أَزۡوَٰجِهِمۡ وَمَا
مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُهُمۡ لِكَيۡلَا يَكُونَ عَلَيۡكَ حَرَجٞۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورٗا رَّحِيمٗا
(50)

(50) O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Verily we have legalised for you those wives whose dowries you have' paid, and those slave women who are in your possession from the booty that Allāh has granted to you. And (legalised for you are) the daughters of your maternal uncles and daughters of your maternal aunts, who have migrated with you. And that believing woman who has gifted herself to the Holy Prophet, if the Holy Prophet desires to marry her. This is exclusive to you and not for the believers. Indeed We are aware of what We have stipulated for them with regard to their wives and the slaves they own so that there is no difficulty for you. Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

SOME LAWS OF MARRIAGE AND THE SPECIAL PRIVILEGE OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

After the demise of Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married many wives. Their names have been mentioned in the commentary of verse 28 of Surah Ahzāb. Most of these wives migrated from Makkah the only exceptions were Sayyidah Safiyya bint Huyay رضى الله عنها who was a Jewess captured during the battle of Khaibar, and Sayyidah Juwayriyya رضى الله عنها who was a captive from the Banu Mustaliq tribe.

Allāh also refers to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم slave woman, Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiyya رضى الله عنها, from whom the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم son, Ibrahīm رضى الله عنه was born. He passed away in infancy.

Allāh says, *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Verily we have legalised for you those wives whose dowries you have paid, and those slave women who are in your possession from the booty that Allāh has granted to you."* The payment of dowry has been mentioned in this verse even though marriage can be contracted without paying the dowry. Of course, it will still be due from the husband at some stage, and should be paid as soon as possible.

Allāh mentions further, *"And (legalised for you are) the daughters of your maternal uncles and daughters of your maternal aunts, who have migrated with you."* Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could have married all these women, the only cousin he married was Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها, the daughter of his paternal aunt.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم proposed for Sayyidah Ummu Hāni رضى الله عنها [the daughter of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم paternal uncle, Abu Tālib, and the sister of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه] she declined on some account. When the above verse was revealed, she said that she was no longer lawful for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because she did not migrate to Madinah. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidah Ummu Hāni رضى الله عنها accepted Islām only when Makkah was conquered. Ulema (*Scholars*) say that migration was not a condition for a woman to be married to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidah Ummu Hāni رضى الله عنها based her statement on her own analogy, which conforms to the ruling of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. [*Tirmidhi*]

"......who have migrated with you." This clause applies to the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and not to the daughters of his maternal uncles and aunts because, like the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم mother, they were all from Madinah and did not require to migrate.

The books of history and of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم biography do not mention any daughters of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم maternal uncles and aunts. Although the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni", after extensive research, has cited the names of a few, it has not been established that any of them married the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Of course, this is not a cause to object to the above verse because the verse never commanded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to marry any of these women. It merely permits him to do so if he desired to.

It may also be said that the verse, though addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى

صلى الله عليه وسلم applies to the Ummah at large, permitting them to marry these women. This is then similar to the opening verse of Surah Talāq (*Surah 65*), where Allāh, though addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, teaches the Ummah the correct method of divorce.

"And that believing woman who has gifted herself to the Holy Prophet (is legal for him) *if the Holy Prophet desires to marry her. This is exclusive to you and not for the believers."* This verse permits the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to marry a woman who is prepared to enter into marriage without any dowry. However, if any woman makes the same offer to another Muslim, he will have to pay her the dowry referred to as 'mithal.'

Commentators differ whether any woman offered herself as a gift to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. While many commentators state that no such incident took place, others are of the opinion that many women did offer themselves to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married some of these women, while he declined the offer of others.

Recording the names of these women, certain commentators make mention of Sayyidah Maymūna bint Hārith رضى الله عنها and others mention Sayyidah Zainab bint Khuzaima رضى الله عنها. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has recorded the names of certain other women as well. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه is emphatic that no such incident took place where a woman offered herself as a gift to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

When making mention of such women, Allāh attached the clause of *"believing"* i.e. the woman had to be a Mu'mina (*Believes*). Ulema (*Scholars*) have deduced from this that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not permitted to marry any Jewish or Christian woman. While it is permissible for a Muslim to marry such women, it is best that they do not, especially if there is a danger that the woman will corrupt the husband's religious life.

'Indeed We are aware of what We have stipulated for them with regard to their wives and the slaves they own..." Allāh is well aware of the injunctions that He has decreed with regard to the marriages of the general Muslim public and the special privileges that He has accorded for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) in the same regard.

"....so that there is no difficulty for you. Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful." Allāh has accorded certain privileges to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that matters are not too strenuous for him. Certain commentators say that this part of the verse applies specifically to the case of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم marrying women who offer themselves as gifts to him.

۞ تُرْجِى مَن تَشَآءُ مِنْهُنَّ وَتُـْٔوِىٓ إِلَيْكَ مَن تَشَآءُ ۖ وَمَنِ ٱبْتَغَيْتَ مِمَّنْ عَزَلْتَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَن تَقَرَّ أَعْيُنُهُنَّ وَلَا يَحْزَنَّ وَيَرْضَيْنَ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْتَهُنَّ كُلُّهُنَّ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَلِيمًا ﴿٥١﴾

(51) You may distance those of them whom you please and accommodate those of them whom you please. There will be no sin on you if you seek those whom you had already distanced. This is best so that their eyes are cooled, they do not grieve, and so that they are all pleased with what you give them. Allāh knows what is within your hearts. Allāh is All Knowing, Tolerant.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS GIVEN THE CHOICE TO WITHHOLD OR SEPARATE FROM WHICHEVER WIVES HE CHOOSES

The above verse allowed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the option to appoint a turn for every wife if he pleases, or to exclude some of them from the turns. This privilege has been accorded only to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is compulsory for the Muslim public to appoint equal and just turns to spend with each wife, but this compulsion did not apply to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He was also allowed to appoint a turn for any wife who previously had been denied a turn.

When this verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives realised that he was not obliged to appoint a turn for them and to grant them an allowance in excess of what they required. In this way, they became pleased with whatever he granted them and with the turns he appointed for them. This is meant by the words, *"This is best so that their eyes are cooled, they do not grieve, and so that they are all pleased with what you give them."*

"Allāh knows what is within your hearts. Allāh is All Knowing, Tolerant." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that this part of the verse is addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his wives. It tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wives that Allāh is aware of the pleasure with which they accepted Allāh's injunctions. It also mentions that Allāh is well aware of the additional affection that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم inadvertently possessed for certain wives. With regard to the turns that he appointed for his wives, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once made the following supplication to Allāh, "O Allāh! This is the distribution of turns that I am capable of making. Do not reproach me for the distribution that is in Your control and I have no power to make (i.e. an equal distribution of affection)." [*Tirmidhi*]

Even though the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not obliged to appoint equal turns between his wives, he still did so with great justice. However, Sayyidah Sauda رضى الله عنها forfeited her turn in favour of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها. Whenever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went on a journey, he drew lots to decide which wife would accompany him.

لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ ٱلنِّسَآءُ مِنۢ بَعْدُ وَلَآ أَن تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَٰجٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ رَّقِيبًا ﴿٥٢﴾

52. After this, women are not permitted for you. It is also not permissible for you to take another woman in marriage in exchange of any wives, even though her

beauty may appeal to you, unless she be your slave. Allāh is Watchful over everything.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS NOT ALLOWED ANY MORE WIVES

The interpretation of the verse is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not permitted to marry any other women after the revelation of the above verse. He was also not permitted to marry another woman in place of one that he may divorce. This interpretation has been reported from Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and others.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that Allāh restricted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to those wives already in his marriage in appreciation of the fact that they all chose to remain with him when he gave them the choice of separation in exchange for a sum of wealth. The details of this have been given in the commentary of verse 28 of this Surah, where Allāh says, *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Say to your wives, 'If you desire the life of this world and its adornments..."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had nine wives at that time.

Another interpretation of the above verse has been reported from other commentators, including Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. They interpret the verse to mean that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not permitted to marry any women besides the types already mentioned in the foregoing verses. Therefore, he was not permitted to marry any family members who did not migrate and women who were not Muslims. He was therefore, permitted to marry only women who were not mentioned in these verses.

Even if the first interpretation is accepted, the law was later abrogated because Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that Allāh granted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم permission to marry other women before his demise. [*Tirmidhi*]

THE REASON FOR THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم MARRYING SEVERAL WOMEN

The Jews, Christians and other enemies of Islām who cannot reply to the penetrating beliefs and dynamic codes of Islām, have resorted to attack Islām from feeble stand points, which they regard as convincing. One of their objections is the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had many wives.

At the outset, one should cast a glance at the miracles of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the greatest being the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān has challenged people from the time of its revelation that they should produce even a single small Surah similar to any of those in the Qur'ān. Up till this day, no individual or group has been able to meet the challenge. None will even be able to do so until Qiyāmah (*Resurrection day*). This fact is sufficient to prove that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was certainly Allāh's true Prophet because the Qur'ān simply cannot be the product of a man.

Since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's true messenger, it follows that he would not do anything contrary to Allāh's will. His every deed was subject to Allāh's approval and command. Allāh, being the Lord of the universe,

reserves the right to accord privileges to whoever He pleases. Therefore, even those deeds of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that were unlike those of other believers *(Mu'minīn)*, were all correct and with Allāh's blessings. One of these privileges was the permitting of several wives at a time. Other Muminīn are restricted to four if they are able to treat them all justly.

Thereafter Allāh revealed the verse saying, *"After this, women are not permitted for you. It is also not permissible for you to take another woman in marriage in exchange of any wives, even though her beauty may appeal to you, unless she be your slave. Allāh is Watchful over everything."*

If the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not Allāh's Prophet and simply married women because of his personal lust, why would he say that Allāh has now restricted him with this verse? It is obvious that a person hankering after his passion will never place restrictions upon himself.

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه once told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to marry the daughter of his uncle Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه because she was extremely beautiful. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم refused saying that he and Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه suckled from the same woman and were brothers in this regard. It was therefore not permissible for him to marry her.

Certain wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also requested him to marry their sisters, but he refused, being restrained by the Shari'ah. These incidents make it evident that he did not act according to his personal whims, but in accordance with Allāh's command. He could have easily satisfied his lusts because the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم relied on him so much. If he desired, he could have married many virgins, but he had only one in his marriage.

His marriage to Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها taught the Ummah that a man who is advanced in years is permitted to marry a young lady. Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه has penned an entire chapter on this aspect. He reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was allowed a period of seclusion with his new bride at Sayyidina Abu Bakr's رضى الله عنه house during the daytime. This single hadith proves that it is permissible for a couple to consummate their marriage at the home of the woman's parents, and it also proves that this act is permissible during the day. In a like manner, the Ahadīth pertaining to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم practical life with his wives teach the Ummah millions of lessons.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها lived with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for only nine years, within which she learnt thousands of Ahadīth, which she taught the Ummah in the 48 years that she lived after his demise. She reported over 2200 Ahadīth and people used to flock in thousands to her tent at Mina during Hajj, when it resembled a university. It is impossible to enumerate the virtues attached to the teachings that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives gifted to the Ummah.

There is not a single facet of a man's life that is not elucidated by the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم words or deeds. Through his wives, the Ummah learnt how to manage their domestic affairs and how to treat their wives and families.

Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها brought her children from her previous marriage with her when she married the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In this

manner, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught the Ummah how to treat and love step children. The Ummah would not have learnt the fine aspects of such a relationship if no wife had brought her children into her marriage with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

One of her children, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abu Salamah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم raised him and once, while eating, he (the child) was placing his hand in every part of the utensil. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him saying, "Take Allāh' s name, eat with your right hand and eat from the side of the utensil closest to you" [Bukhari and Muslim]. Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها alone reported 378 Ahadīth.

Sayyidah Juwayriyya رضى الله عنها was captured during an expedition and distributed as part of the booty. She fell to the lot of Sayyidina Thābit bin Qais رضى الله عنه or one of his cousins. However, she contracted a deal with her master to be set free upon the payment of a stipulated sum. When she approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for financial assistance to pay the sum, he told her, "Should I not inform you of something better?" When she agreed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked her if she would prefer that he pay her debt and then marry her. She happily agreed and the couple were married.

Since thousands of her clan were slaves of the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم, the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم, in honour of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم freed every slave belonging to her clan. Such was the veneration that the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم had for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! They could not bear to keep any of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم relatives by marriage in captivity.

Relating the incident, Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها says, "A hundred families of the Banu Mustaliq were freed on account Sayyidah Juwayriyyah's رضى الله عنها marriage to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. I do not know of any woman who was so blessed to her people as she was to her clan."

Sayyidah Ummu Habība رضى الله عنها accepted Islām in Makkah and migrated with her husband to Abysinnia. Her husband became a Christian and died a few days later. It was then that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent a marriage proposal to her via the king Najashi. She accepted the proposal and Najashi himself contracted the marriage in Abysinnia.

She was the daughter of Abu Sufyān, who was then the leader of the Quraysh and who had left no stone unturned to harass and harm the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Muslims. When he received the news of the marriage he said, "He [*The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم] is a man whose nose cannot be cut." By this he meant that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was an extremely noble person who could not be disgraced. He added, "Here we are busy trying to humiliate him, but my daughter has just married him."

One of the reasons behind this marriage was that a disbeliever leader should be embarrassed. There were numerous other political motives to the marriage, which served the cause of Islām well. Of course, Allāh knows best the details of this.

From the age of 25 until the age of 50, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

remained with one wife, Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها. It was only after her demise that he married Sayyidah Sauda رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, with whom he could not live because of her young age. She lived with her parents until the 2nd year after the Hijrah, when she began to live with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was then 54 years of age and until then had only two wives.

The following year he married Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها, a short while after which he married Sayyidah Zainab bint Khuzaima رضى الله عنها. Sayyidah Zainab bint Khuzaima رضى الله عنها lived for only eighteen months after her marriage to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, while other narrations state that the duration was only three months.

In the 4th year after the Hijrah the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها, and then married Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها in the 5th year after the Hijrah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was then 58 years of age. It was only after this that he married Sayyidah Juwayriyyah رضى الله عنها, Sayyidah Ummu Habība رضى الله عنها, Sayyidah Safiyya رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Maymūna رضى الله عنه.

In essence, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم lived with only one wife until the age of *54*, i.e. with Sayyidah Khadīja رضى الله عنها for 25 years, and then with Sayyidah Sauda رضى الله عنها for another four or five years. At *58*, he had four wives, after which he married the others. He then passed away in the 10th year after the Hijrah.

Of these wives, only Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها was a virgin, while the others were all widows, some of whom had been married twice before. Then too, they entered into the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم marriage during the last years of his life.

How can the enemies of Islām who are drowning in their own lust and carnal passions ever hope to perceive the noble character and motives of Islām, which are directed at reforming societies and individuals? Such people base their analogies and presumptions on their own lives and thoughts, because of which they accuse the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of marrying many women merely to satiate his passions (Allāh forbid!). A clear thinking person will never arrive at this conclusion if he studies the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم pure life.

The Quraysh of Makkah especially noted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for his impeccable behaviour as a youth. At 25, as a young man, he married a widow who had already been married twice. (If he were someone only interested in satisfying his passions, he would have never married a 40 year old woman when he was so young). During the 25 years of marriage to her, he spent many months in meditation in the cave of Hira. He married a second wife only at the age of fifty, when he had passed the vibrancy of youth.

During all these years, he lived under the scrutiny of the Quraysh. However, even at the height of the opposition towards him, when they called him a liar and a magician, none dared accuse him of immoral and licentious behaviour. If he were a person interested only in satisfying his carnal passions, they would certainly have implicated him in some scandal.

All one has to do is to ponder over the reason for a person to marry so many women towards the end of his life when his youth was a pristine example of purity, abstinence and piety. The reasons that surface are those already mentioned above.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَدْخُلُواْ بُيُوتَ ٱلنَّبِيِّ إِلَّآ أَن يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامٍ غَيْرَ
نَٰظِرِينَ إِنَىٰهُ وَلَٰكِنْ إِذَا دُعِيتُمْ فَٱدْخُلُواْ فَإِذَا طَعِمْتُمْ فَٱنتَشِرُواْ وَلَا مُسْتَـْٔنِسِينَ لِحَدِيثٍ
إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمْ كَانَ يُؤْذِى ٱلنَّبِيَّ فَيَسْتَحْىِۦ مِنكُمْ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَحْىِۦ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ وَإِذَا
سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَٰعًا فَسْـَٔلُوهُنَّ مِن وَرَآءِ حِجَابٍ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ
وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَن تُؤْذُواْ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَن تَنكِحُوٓاْ أَزْوَٰجَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦٓ أَبَدًا
إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمْ كَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ عَظِيمًا ﴿53﴾ إِن تُبْدُواْ شَيْـًٔا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ
بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿54﴾

(53) O you who believe! Enter the rooms of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم only when you are permitted to do so to partake of a meal. Then too, do not wait for it to be prepared, but enter when you are summoned and disperse once you have eaten without enjoying a conversation. Indeed this hurts the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but he is shy (to tell you). Allāh does not shy away from the truth. So when you ask them (his wives) for anything, then ask them from behind a curtain. This is purer for your hearts and for their hearts. It is not for you to hurt the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, nor to ever marry his wives after him. Verily this is grave in the sight of your Lord. (54) If you reveal something or conceal it, then Allāh certainly has knowledge of everything.

THE INCIDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LAW OF HIJĀB (*VEIL*) BEING REVEALED

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها, he invited the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم for a 'walīma' meal. After the Sahabah رضى الله عنه had eaten, some of them remained sitting and talking for a long time. Because of his noble and gentle temperament, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not directly tell them to leave, but he stood up to leave. However, they failed to grasp the message he was giving them. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left, some people also left, but others remained seated.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reached the door of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, but returned thinking that the people would have left by then. However, he still found them there when he returned, and left again for Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها room. These people soon left and, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was informed about this, he returned to the room. Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه

reports that he was also about to enter the room with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prevented him from entering and drew the curtain down. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse *"O you who believe! Enter the rooms of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم only when you are permitted to do so to partake of a meal. Then too, do not wait for it to be prepared, but enter when you are summoned and disperse once you have eaten without enjoying a (lengthy) conversation. Indeed this hurts the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but he is shy (to tell you). Allāh does not shy away from the truth..."*

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah, Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه was ten years old. Since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها in the 5th year after the Hijrah, Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه was only 15 years old at that time. He was an attendant to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and always entered the house with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is what he intended to do when the incident took place, but the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prevented him from entering because the verse enforced the laws of Hijāb (*veil*). Since he was with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم throughout this incident, he said, "I know best about this."

The first law propounded in this verse is that people should enter the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم home only when invited in. They should then arrive only when called, and not arrive so early that the food is still being prepared. The second law is that, after eating, they should disperse and not remain talking. Such a delay places the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in a difficult situation, but he is unable to tell people because he considered their feelings. It is therefore the duty of people to think for themselves.

The third injunction stated in the verse is *"So when you ask them (his wives) for anything, then ask them from behind a curtain. This is purer for your hearts and for their hearts."* There should not be any face-to-face conversation between a woman and a strange (non-Mahram) male.

The fourth injunction is a general ruling after the, specific ruling mentioned above, where people are told not to cause inconvenience to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says, *'It is not for you to hurt the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم..."*

The fifth ruling is that no Muslim can *"ever marry his [the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم] wives after him."* Allāh states at the beginning of this Surah that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives are like mothers to the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Therefore, in honour and reverence of them, no one was permitted to marry them after the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم demise.

Referring to marrying the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives, Allāh says, *"Verily this is grave in the sight of your Lord."* It would be a grave sin if any person were to do such a thing, or even intend it. The intention to sin is also sinful, as Allāh continues to say, *"If you reveal something* (some sin) *or conceal it, then Allāh certainly has knowledge of everything."*

Of the five laws mentioned above, only the last one applies exclusively to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The other four applies to every believer *(Mu'min)*. Therefore, people may enter the homes of others only with their permission and

should not arrive too early, nor remain sitting long afterwards.

Whenever any person requires something from a strange (non-Mahram) woman, he should address her from behind a veil. Certain ignorant people of our times claim that this law applied only to the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They say that there is no necessity for today's women to cover their faces. They should stop to think that if this law applied for the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives, who are mothers to the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, it will apply to a greater degree to other women, especially in this age of moral decadence.

The detailed laws of Hijāb (*veil*) were given in the commentary of verse 31 of Surah Nūr (Surah 24), where Allāh says, *"And tell the believing women that they should lower their gazes and preserve their chastity. They must not expose their beauty..."* Much has also been discussed in the commentary of verse 33 of this Surah, where Allāh says, *"Remain in your homes and do not make a display of yourselves as was the practice of the former period of ignorance."* *Insha Allāh,* more shall still follow in the ensuing verses.

لَّا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِنَّ فِىٓ ءَابَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبْنَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبْنَآءِ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبْنَآءِ أَخَوَٰتِهِنَّ وَلَا نِسَآئِهِنَّ وَلَا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُنَّ ۗ وَٱتَّقِينَ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدًا ﴿٥٥﴾

(55) There is no sin on them [the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] with regard to their fathers, their sons, their brothers, the sons of their brothers, the sons of their sisters, their fellow women and their slave women. They should fear Allāh. Indeed Allāh is Witness over everything.

THE PERMISSION FOR WOMEN TO BE SEEN ONLY BY THEIR MAHRAM (*ONE OF THE RELATIVES WITH WHOM THE MARRIAGE CANNOT BE TOOK PLACED*)

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that when the verse of Hijāb (*veil*) was revealed, the relatives of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives began to ask whether the laws of Hijāb (*veil*) must also be exercised with their family and relatives. It was then that the above verse was revealed, permitting women to be seen by the men mentioned in the verse.

Although the verse cites only four categories of men, others are also regarded as Mahram when they have a close blood relation with a woman. The maternal and paternal uncles are not mentioned in the verse because they are just like the father to a woman.

The verse also permits women to be seen by other women. However, Muslim women should abstain from being seen by disbelievers women. The verse then continues to permit a woman being seen by her slave women. Of course, she has to exercise the laws of Hijāb (*veil*) with regard to slave men. Other categories of people who may see a woman have been mentioned in the

commentary on verse 31 of Surah Nūr (*Surah 24*).

While the verse of Surah Nūr applies to all women including the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives, the above verse of Surah Ahzāb specifically refers to the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that a person may not think that they cannot be seen by their Mahram (*with home whom the marriage cannot be committed*) relatives.

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives saying, *"They should fear Allāh. Indeed Allāh is Witness over everything."* The realisation that Allāh is Witness *"over everything"* creates taqwa in the heart.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتَهُۥ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِيِّۚ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ صَلُّواْ عَلَيۡهِ وَسَلِّمُواْ تَسۡلِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

(56) Verily Allāh and his angels shower their special mercies on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. O you who believe! Convey mercies and salutations upon him.

THE BELIEVERS ARE ENJOINED TO INVOKE MERCY FOR AND TO SEND SALUTATIONS UPON THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم JUST AS ALLĀH AND HIS ANGELS DO

Urging the believers *(Mu'minīn)* to invoke special mercies on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh begins by saying that He and His angels convey their mercies upon him. It is incumbent on all Muslims to pray for Allāh's mercies to be showered on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because we cannot repay the favours he has done for us. The reason for expressing the command in this manner is that the believers *(Mu'minīn)* should take pride in doing something that Allāh and His angels also do.

The word 'yusallūna' (translated above as *"shower their special mercies")* is used with the following three meanings, depending on whom it refers to: (1) Mercy, (2) prayer *(du'ā)*, and (3) Praise. This is similar to love, which varies, depending on the person being referred to. The love a father has for his son will be different from the love which that son has for the father. Similarly, the love a son has for his mother differs from the love he has for his wife.

In the same way, the purport of the word "yusallūna" varies according to the person it is used for. When referring to Allāh, it means that Allāh showers his special mercies on a person. When used for the angels, it means that they make prayer *(du'ā)* for Allāh's forgiveness on behalf of someone. When used for the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, it means that they pray for Allāh's mercy to be showered on someone. It also means that they praise someone.

The honour that Allāh has bestowed on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this world is that Allāh has elevated his status so that people take his name favourably, and his religion will perpetuate until the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. The honour that Allāh will accord him in the Hereafter is that Allāh will allow

him to make the greatest intercession when he will attain the position of the "Maqām Mahmūd", and his virtue will shine above all others.

The word 'Salām' (translated above as *"salutations")* in this context means that that the believers *(Mu'minīn)* pray for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be safeguarded from all adversities, difficulties and defects. This is the meaning of the greeting of Salām that Muslims use. Some Ulema (*Scholars*) say that since 'Salām' is one of Allāh's names, the greeting would mean that Allāh must protect the person at all times.

Because of the command in this verse, Ulema (*Scholars*) say that it is compulsory that every Muslim recites Durūd [invoke mercy and salutations upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] at least once in his lifetime. Imām Tahāwi رحمة الله عليه says that Durūd (*benediction*) should be recited every time the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم name is mentioned in a gathering. However, the ruling in this regard is that the listeners and the speaker recite Durūd (*Benediction*) at least once during the gathering. Of course, it is best that it be recited every time.

The term "Salāh upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم" means that a person praises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with love and devotion.

THE VIRTUES OF DURŪD (*BENEDICTION*)

Muslim (*v. 1 p. 166*) reports from Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh will send ten mercies on the person who sends one to me {i.e. recites Durūd (*benediction*) once}." Nasa'ī adds that the person's stages in the Hereafter will be raised ten times, ten rewards will be added to his records of deeds, and ten sins will be erased from his record of sins.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who recites the most Durūd (*benediction*) will be closest to him on the Doomsday (*Day of Qiyāmah*).

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه also narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A group of angels travel throughout the earth to convey the greetings of my Ummah to me."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "Do not make your homes graveyards (by not performing Salāh) and do not make my grave an Eid (by celebrating there). Send Durūd (*benediction*) to me because your Durūd (*benediction*) is conveyed to me irrespective of where you are." Since no acts of worship take place in the graveyard, the homes should not be left without worship. Therefore, people should perform their Nafl (*optional prays*) and sunnah Salāh at home. Making the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم grave an Eid means that people should not visit his grave adorned in their finery. They should visit it with utmost respect and reverence. The presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should be highly esteemed and none must even consider laughing and joking at his graveside.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that when a person recites Durūd (*benediction*) on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once, Allāh, and His angels invoke seventy mercies upon him. [*"Mishkāt" p. 87*]

Mulla Ali Qāri رحمة الله عليه writes that the above narration applies to reciting Durūd (*benediction*) on Fridays because the rewards of deeds tend to be multiplied during auspicious times.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Friday is the best of days. It was on this day that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was created, and passed away. The trumpet (to signal the advent of Doomsday (*Qiyāmah*) will be blown on this day, causing all of creation to collapse. Since Friday is the best day, sent Durūd (*benediction*) to me in abundance on this day because your Durūd (*benediction*) is presented to me." [*Abu Dawūd v. 1 p. 150*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "The angels invoke mercy for the person who recites Durūd (*benediction*) for me. So a person has the choice to either recite Durūd (*benediction*) on my behalf in abundance or to recite it less frequently." [*Ibn Majah*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه says, "I was performing Salāh when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived with Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. As I completed my Salāh in the sitting posture, I praised Allāh and recited Durūd (*benediction*). I then started making du'ā. Noticing this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told me, 'Ask, for you shall receive whatever you ask of Allāh." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Fudāla bin Ubaid رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in the Masjid when a person entered the Masjid and began performing Salāh. After his Salāh, he began to make prayer *(du'ā)* saying, "O Allāh! Forgive me and have mercy on me." Hearing this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "O person performing Salāh! You were hasty. Remember, the next time you perform Salāh and then sit down to make du'ā, begin with praising Allāh as He deserves to be praised, recite Durūd (*benediction*), and then ask what you have to ask."

Sayyidina Fudāla bin Ubaid رضى الله عنه narrates further that another person then performed Salāh and, after the Salāh, praised Allāh and recited Durūd (*benediction*) before beginning his prayer *(du'ā)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed him saying, "O person performing Salāh! Make prayer *(du'ā)*, for your du'ā will be accepted." [*Tirmidhi*]

This hadith teaches us how to make du'ā. A person should commence by praising Allāh and then reciting Durūd (*benediction*). Recitation of Durūd (*benediction*) has a great effect in securing the acceptance of prayer's *(du'ā's)*. In fact, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه used to say that a person's prayer *(du'ā)* is suspended between the heavens and the earth if he does not recite Durūd (*benediction*). [*"Mishkāt" p. 87*]

Saints have mentioned that, while a person may not be rewarded for other acts of Dhikr, Durūd (*benediction*) is always rewarded. A person should therefore recite Durūd (*benediction*) at the beginning and at the end of his prayer *(du'ā)*. Allāh, in his magnanimity, will not only accept the two ends of the prayer *(du'ā)* but also the content in between. [*Hisnul Hasīn*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whenever people participate in a gathering that is devoid of Allāh's remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* and Durūd

(*benediction*), the gathering will be a source of harm for them. Allāh may punish them or forgive them if He wills." [*Tirmidhi*]

Listeners and speakers at any gathering should recite Durūd (*benediction*) whenever the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم name is mentioned. While the minimum requirement is that it be recited only once throughout the course of the gathering, it is best to recite it every time the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم name is mentioned because warnings have been sounded against not reciting Durūd (*benediction*).

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A true miser is the one who does not recite Durūd (*benediction*) when my name, is mentioned." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه reports that he was once with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, when the latter asked, "Should I not inform you about the worst miser?" When the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم asked to be informed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The one who does not recite Durūd (*benediction*) when my name is taken is the worst miser." [*"Targhīb wat Tarhīb"*]

Sayyidina Ka'b bin Ujrah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once instructed the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم to draw close to the pulpit. When they did so, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم began to ascend the pulpit. As he took the first step, he said, "Āmīn!" When he mounted the second step, he again said. "Āmīn!" and then repeated "Āmīn!" upon taking the third step.

When he descended from the pulpit, the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم said, "We have seen you mount the pulpit in a manner that we have never noticed before." the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained the reason saying, "When I climbed the first step, Jibr'īl عليه السلام said, 'May that person be destroyed who finds the month of Ramadhān and does not secure forgiveness for himself.' Thereupon I said 'Āmīn!' As I mounted the second step, he said, 'May that person be destroyed who does not recite Durūd (*benediction*) when your name is taken before him.' I said Āmīn! to this as well. When I climbed the third step he said. 'May that person be destroyed, who finds one or both of his parents in old age and still does not secure his admission into Heaven.' Thereupon I also said, 'Āmīn!"

SOME PERTINENT RULINGS

Durūd (*benediction*) must be recited every time the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم name is said or heard. It is also compulsory to write the Durūd (*benediction*) whenever writing his name. The person should at least say or write the words, "صلى الله عليه وسلم" or "عليه الصلوة والسلام." The practice of some people to simply write the abbreviated form (like S.Á.W.) is incorrect. The full phrase must be written.

Sayyidina Abu Talha رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once extremely happy. He said, "Jibr'īl عليه السلام came to me with a message from Allāh saying, 'O Muhammad! Does it not please you to know that when a member of your Ummah recites Durūd (*benediction*) for you, I shall grant him ten mercies? And I will sent ten salutations (Salām) on the one who sends salutations to you?" [*Nasa'ī*]

RULING: The Salāh upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم (i.e. invoking Allāh's mercy for him) should be recited along with the salutations (Salām). Certain Ulema (*Scholars*) have mentioned that it is undesirable (*Makrūh Tanzihi*) for a person to recite only one of the above.

Various methods of reciting Durūd (*benediction*) have been reported in the Ahadīth. It will be best to use these words, although it is permissible to use other words.

Sayyidina Ka'b bin Ujrah رضى الله عنه reports that the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم how they should recite Durūd (*benediction*) for him and his family because this has been ordained by Allāh at the end of Salāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then taught them the following words:

{**TRANSLATION:** "O Allāh! Send Your special mercies on Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the family of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, just as You have sent Your special mercies on Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and the family of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Verily You are Worthy of all praise, the Most Honoured. O Allāh! Send Your blessings on Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the family of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, just as You have sent Your blessings on Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and the family of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Verily You are Worthy of all praise, The Most Honoured."

This Durūd (*benediction*) is referred to as the Durūd – e - Ibrahīm. Sayyidina Abu Humaid Sā'idi رضى الله عنه narrates that the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as to how were they to recite the Durūd (*benediction*). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied with the following words:

(**TRANSLATION:** "O Allāh! Send Your special mercies on Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, his wives and his progeny, just as You have sent Your special mercies to the family of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. And bless Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, his wives and his progeny, just as You have blessed the family of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Verily You are Worthy of all praise. The Most Honoured.") [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever wishes fill his scale of rewards for reciting Durūd (*benediction*) for me and my family, then he should recite:

(**TRANSLATION:** 'O Allāh! Send Your special mercies on Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, the unlettered The Holy Prophet, on his wives, the mothers of the believers (*Mu'minīn*), on his progeny and on the members of his household; just as You have showered Your special mercies on the family of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Verily You are Worthy of all praise, The Most Honoured."') [*Abu Dawūd p. 141*]

Sayyidina Ruwayfi رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that his intercession is binding for the person who, after reciting Durūd (*benediction*),

makes the following supplication:

{**TRANSLATION:** "O Allāh! Take [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] to the exalted position close to You on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*."} [*"Mishkāt" p. 87*]

NOTE: To facilitate abundant recitation of Durūd (*benediction*), certain saints have formulated the following Durūd (*benediction*).

THE REASONS FOR RECITING DURŪD (*BENEDICTION*)

Sayyidina Hakīmul Ummah Muhammad Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has written the following reasons for Durūd (*benediction*) in his book, *"Nashrut Tīb"*:

A. Not only did the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم convey Allāh' s message to the Ummah but he also formulated plans for their reformation and went to great pains to pray for them. In addition to this, he was deeply affected by any difficulty that they experienced. He was therefore their benefactor, as well as a means of channelling Allāh's mercy to them.

Logic demands that a person expresses gratitude for the favour of another. Since the Ummah are unable to repay the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for the benevolence he showed to them, the Shari'ah has ordained that they recite Durūd (*benediction*) on his behalf.

B. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is Allāh's beloved. Since a request in favour of a beloved will attract the love of the lover, people will become beloved in the sight of Allāh by invoking Allāh's mercy upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when they recite Durūd (*benediction*). Although Allāh will shower his mercy and blessings on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, who does not require our prayer's *(du'ā's)*, it is we who will benefit by attaining proximity to Allāh.

C. By reciting Durūd (*benediction*), the servitude of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to Allāh is displayed because it proves that even the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم requires Allāh' s mercy and blessings. This dispels the false notion of many people who, seeing the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم miracles, think that he has control over the affairs of the universe and believe that he has the authority to alter the laws of the Shari'ah.

D. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, like his Ummah, was a human being. He also had to eat, drink and fulfil other necessities of life. In fact, the Ummah may excel the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in certain aspects, such as wealth. It is therefore possible that some people, viewing such factors, may consider the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be inferior to them and may not want to follow him.

This is one of the reasons why the Shari'ah has ordained the recitation of Durūd (*benediction*). In this way, people will not allow their wealth to fool them into thinking that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is inferior to them. Since the Durūd (*benediction*) expresses that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم enjoys the special mercies and blessings of Allāh, people are taught that their wealth is totally insignificant when compared to Allāh's special mercy and blessings.

By adding titles like 'Sayyidina' ('our leader') before the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم name and speaking about his efforts for the religion, people will regard

him to be their benefactor and will never consider themselves superior to him.

E. Becoming overawed by their belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, some people disregard the importance and virtue of links to Allāh, such as the Prophets عليهم السلام. Although bypassing these links to Allāh does not necessarily affect one's belief *(Imān)*, Allāh has made them a pathway to His pleasure. They have to be highly regarded and reverence for them cannot be regarded as distracting from Allāh. In fact, showing reverence to them perfects one's relationship with Allāh.

Revering the messenger of a king expresses a person's reverence for the king himself. Someone entertaining a king's messenger will be foolish to think that he is neglecting to show respect for the king. In fact, the more he reveres the messenger, the more his reverence for the king will become manifest. The Shari'ah has commanded the Ummah to *"Convey mercies and salutations"* upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that it may be a means of gaining proximity to Allāh. Showing regard for any medium to reach one's goal cannot be regarded as opposition to the goal.

It is for these reasons that Allāh declares *"O you who believe! Convey mercies and salutations upon* him." In this manner people are guaranteed Allāh's pleasure.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿57﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ مَا ٱكْتَسَبُوا۟ فَقَدِ ٱحْتَمَلُوا۟ بُهْتَٰنًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿58﴾

(57) Verily those who hurt Allāh and His messenger, Allāh curses them in this world and in the Hereafter, and has prepared a humiliating punishment for them. (58) Those who harm the believing men and women for no sin on their part will bear the burden of slander and a manifest sin.

THE EVIL FATE TO BE SUFFERED BY THOSE WHO HARM AND SLANDER THE BELIEVERS *(MU'MINĪN)*

Allāh says, *"Verily those who hurt Allāh and His messenger, Allāh curses them in this world and in the Hereafter, and has prepared a humiliating punishment for them."* Allāh's curse denotes punishment and being cast away from Allāh's mercy. The worst curse will be because of disbelief. None can hope to hurt Allāh, but harming any of Allāh's creation will be interpreted as harming Allāh because Allāh dislikes such a deed.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh says, 'Man hurts me and swears time, whereas I am time (the Creator of time). Everything is in My control, and I alternate the night and the day." [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that none is as tolerant as Allāh because He even protects and sustains people who ascribe partners to Him.

flesh of their dead brothers (i.e. they were backbiters) and who defamed them." [*"Mishkāt" p. 429*]

The Qur'ān and Ahadīth have expressed great repulsion for backbiting, slandering, carrying tales and harbouring ill feelings towards others. Muslims should restrain their tongues at all times and make an effort to defend the honour of others who may be defamed.

Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Anas رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh will appoint an angel to save that person from the Fire of Hell, who defends the honour of a Muslim when he is being defamed by a hypocrite. He also added that on the bridge across Hell, Allāh will halt the person who defamed a Muslim until he emerges from his defamation (i.e. until he is forgiven by the person whom he defamed). [*"Mishkāt" p. 424*]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَآءِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِن جَلَٰبِيبِهِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَن يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥٩﴾ لَّئِن لَّمْ يَنتَهِ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَٱلْمُرْجِفُونَ فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ لَنُغْرِيَنَّكَ بِهِمْ ثُمَّ لَا يُجَاوِرُونَكَ فِيهَآ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٦٠﴾ مَّلْعُونِينَ أَيْنَمَا ثُقِفُوٓا۟ أُخِذُوا۟ وَقُتِّلُوا۟ تَقْتِيلًا ﴿٦١﴾ سُنَّةَ ٱللَّهِ فِى ٱلَّذِينَ خَلَوْا۟ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ ٱللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٦٢﴾

(59) O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Tell your wives, your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their "jalābīb" over themselves. This is best for their recognition so that they are not harmed. Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful. (60) If the hypocrites, those with a disease in their hearts and those who spread rumours in Madinah do not desist, We will definitely grant you authority over them, after which they will hardly be able to live with you in Madinah. (61) They are accursed. Wherever they go, they will be seized and massacred. (62) This was the practice of Allāh with those who passed before. You will never find any change in Allāh's practice.

THE COMMAND FOR ALL BELIEVING WOMEN TO OBSERVE THE LAWS OF HIJĀB (VEIL

Commentators write that the women of Madinah used to go to the low-lying areas of their date plantations to relieve themselves at night. Some hypocrites and others used to stand beside the road and interfere with the women as they passed. Although they interfered only with slave women, they sometimes mistook other women as slaves.

It was also a practice of the Jews and other enemies of Islām that when the Muslim army was out, they used to alarm the Muslims in Madinah by shouting

that an enemy is approaching, or that the Muslim army has been defeated.

Instructing the Muslim women to conceal themselves, Allāh says, *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Tell your wives, your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their 'jalābīb' over themselves."* The "jalābīb" are large shawls that cover a woman from head to toe. The verse instructs women to drape the shawls over their heads as well, thereby covering the entire body.

In this way, free women could be recognised from slave women because slave women were not required to cover themselves so thoroughly because of their menial tasks. In this way, free women would not run the risk of being harassed by the uncouth ruffians. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"This is best for their recognition so that they are not harmed. Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه explains the verse to mean that women should cover themselves in such a manner that their entire body is covered, with only a small opening for one eye to enable the woman to see. He says that free women can be differentiated from slave women in this way so that no one interferes with them. Although it is not permissible to interfere with slave women either, when free women don proper Hijāb (*veil*), ruffians will not be able to make the excuse that they could not differentiate between the two. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 22 p. 89*]

The verse command the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to instruct his *"daughters"* as well. The usage of a plural in this verse makes it clear that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had several daughters, not only one [Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها] as the Rawāfidh claim.

The verse also makes it clear that the command for Hijāb (*veil*) applies to all believers *(Mu'minīn)* women and not only to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives and daughters (as some claim).

Referring to the practice of the Jews and the hypocrites to alarm the Muslims, Allāh says, *"If the hypocrites, those with a disease in their hearts* (i.e. the weak Muslims) *and those who spread rumours in Madinah do not desist, We will definitely grant you* [O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *authority over them, after which they will hardly be able to live with you in Madinah."* This verse warns these people that if they do not mend their ways, Allāh will command the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to treat them as enemies and perhaps wage Jihād against them. They will then be unable to live peacefully in Madinah.

Describing them further Allāh says, *"They are accursed. Wherever they go (after being expelled from Madinah), they will be seized and massacred. This was the practice of Allāh with those who passed before. You will never find any change in Allāh 's practice."* Allāh also ensured that the rebellious people of the previous nations were expelled from their homes because of their mischief.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the hypocrites slackened in their mischief after the revelation of this verse, whereby they were saved from being banished and killed. Other commentators state that the specific hypocrites referred to in the verse did not desist as they were told and were banished from the Masjid. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also instructed that their funeral

prayer (Janazah) should not be performed. In this manner they were humiliated.

From the Jewish tribes, the Banu Quraizah were banished from Madinah, while the men of the Banu Nadhīr were all put to the sword and their families taken as prisoners. The Jews played a major part in spreading the false rumours to scare the Muslims.

يَسْـَٔلُكَ ٱلنَّاسُ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ تَكُونُ
قَرِيبًا ﴿٦٣﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَعَنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ سَعِيرًا ﴿٦٤﴾ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ لَّا يَجِدُونَ
وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٦٥﴾ يَوْمَ تُقَلَّبُ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِى ٱلنَّارِ يَقُولُونَ يَٰلَيْتَنَآ أَطَعْنَا ٱللَّهَ وَأَطَعْنَا
ٱلرَّسُولَا۠ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّآ أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَآءَنَا فَأَضَلُّونَا ٱلسَّبِيلَا۠ ﴿٦٧﴾ رَبَّنَآ
ءَاتِهِمْ ضِعْفَيْنِ مِنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ وَٱلْعَنْهُمْ لَعْنًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٦٨﴾

(63) People ask you about Judgment day (Qiyāmah). Say, "The knowledge about it is only with Allāh. You will be surprised to know that perhaps Judgment day (Qiyāmah) is close." (64) Verily Allāh has cursed the disbelievers and prepared the Blaze for them. (65) They will abide there forever and will not find any protecting friend, nor any helper. (66) The day when their faces will be overturned in the Fire as they say, "O! If only we had obeyed Allāh and obeyed the messenger!" (67) They will say, "O our Lord! We followed our leaders and our elders, but they misled us from the path." (68) "O our Lord.' Give them double punishment and curse them ever so greatly."

ALLĀH HAS CURSED THE DISBELIEVERS, THEY WILL CURSE THEIR LEADERS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* AND REQUEST ALLĀH TO INFLICT DOUBLE THE PUNISHMENT ON THEM

In an effort to refute the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*, the disbelievers used to ask the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them exactly when Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will take place. Allāh replies to their question by saying, *"The knowledge about it is only with Allāh."* Knowledge of the exact date of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* is not known by any angel or Prophet. Only Allāh has knowledge of this. It will occur when He decrees and the fact that it has not yet occurred does not mean that it will not take place.

"You will be surprised to know that perhaps Judgment day (Qiyāmah) is close." Since the time of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* is unknown, people should prepare themselves for it because it can occur at any moment. They should not waste their time asking about it.

"Verily Allāh has cursed the disbelievers and prepared the Blaze for them." Even if the disbelievers seem to be enjoying a good life, they are constantly under Allāh's curse, which cannot be regarded as a worthwhile life. Thereafter, they will have to suffer the eternal punishment of the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"They will*

abide there forever and will not find any protecting friend, nor any helper. The day when their faces will be overturned in the Fire as they say, 'O! If only we had obeyed Allāh and obeyed the messenger!" Lamenting over their pitiable plight, they will also say, *"O our Lord! We followed our leaders and our elders, but they misled us from the path."*

Wherever Islām spreads, the leaders and chieftains also present the greatest obstacles. They refuse to accept the message and will not allow others to accept either. All relations will be severed on the Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* and no person will be able to assist another in any way. Every person will then curse the next, Allāh continues to say that the people will plead to Allāh saying, *"O our Lord! Give them* (our leaders and elders) *double punishment and curse them greatly."*

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاذَوْا۟ مُوسَىٰ فَبَرَّأَهُ ٱللَّهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا۟ ۚ وَكَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَجِيهًا ﴿٦٩﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَٰلَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾

(69) O you who believe! Do not be like those who hurt Mūsa, after which Allāh absolved him of what they said. He was extremely honourable in Allāh's sight. O you who believe! Fear Allāh and speak the truth. (71) Allāh will correct your deeds for you and forgive your sins. Whoever obeys Allāh has greatly succeeded.

THE MUSLIMS ARE COMMANDED NOT TO BE LIKE THOSE WHO HURT SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام

Bukhari reports from Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه the following hadith of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم: The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was a bashful person and ensured that none saw even the skin of his body. According to another narration, the Bani Isrā'īl publicly bathed naked and looked at each other's bodies. Out of his modesty, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام always bathed in seclusion. Some people, intending to hurt him, spread the rumour that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام bathed alone because he suffered from white liver or some skin disease. Some even said that his testicles were swollen.

To absolve him of the accusation, Allāh made it transpire that the rock upon which Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام placed his clothes, moved away with his garments. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام chased after it with his staff in his hand shouting, "O rock! Bring back my clothes! Bring back my clothes!" A group of people from the Bani Isrā'īl happened to see him chasing the rock and they managed to get a good look at his body. They then realised that the rumours were false and that Allāh had created Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام in a most perfect manner.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام caught up with the rock and hit it with his staff. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه says, "By Allāh! When he struck the rock, three, four, five, six or seven marks were left on it."

Referring to this incident, Allāh says, *"O you who believe! Do not be like those who hurt Mūsa, after which Allāh absolved him of what they said. He was extremely honourable in Allāh 's sight."* But what was the hurt caused to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which necessitated this verse?

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم distributed the booty after the battle of Hunain and happened to give certain people more than others. Someone then mentioned, "This distribution is without of justice," or "Allāh's pleasure is not intended in this distribution." When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reported these words to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he replied, "If Allāh and His messenger are not just, then who is? May Allāh have mercy on Mūsa عليه السلام. He was given even more hardship, but exercised patience." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 446 and 483*]

The fact of the above matter is that the wealth distributed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on that occasion was not part of the booty itself, but the wealth of "fay" which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could give to whoever he pleased.

Allāh had granted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the authority to distribute this wealth at his discretion. He did not give any person what was because of another.

Commentators have written that it is an act of disbelief to object to any action of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This crime is punishable by death. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not execute the person who raised the objection because it was necessary at that particular time to foster cordial relations. Since people would say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم kills his own people, the person's life was spared for the sake of propagating Islām.

Any person intending to propagate the truth will encounter such abuse, but will have to endure it patiently, just as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام did.

Allāh says further, *"O you who believe! Fear Allāh and speak the truth."* This verse urges speaking the truth as well as speaking with justice, speaking of matter related to Religion, and all good speech. According to Sayyidina Ikrma رضى الله عنه, speaking *"the truth"* refers to reciting the Kalimah, *"Lā ilāha IllAllāh"*.

Allāh first mentions fearing Him because all good deeds become easy for the person who fears Allāh. Armed with the fear of Allāh, a person will endeavour to perform good deeds and abstain from evil deeds.

By adopting taqwa (fear of Allāh) and speaking well, "Allāh will correct (accept) your deeds for you and forgive your sins."

SUCCESS WILL BE GAINED BY OBEYING ALLĀH AND THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

"Whoever obeys Allāh has greatly succeeded." While some people regard wealth as a token of success and others regard position and a profitable occupation as a measure of success, it must be borne in mind that the true measure of success is that which is stipulated by Allāh i.e. obedience to Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

In the marriage sermon, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite the following three verses:

- *"O Mankind, fear your Lord who created you from a single soul, created its spouse from it, and spread multitudes of men and women from the two. Fear that Allāh by Whom you ask of each other and (be wary of) family ties. Verily Allāh is Vigilant over you."* [Surah Nisā (4), verse 1]
- *"O you who believe, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims..."* [Surah Āl Imrān (3), verse 102]
- *"O you who believe! Fear Allāh and speak the truth. Allāh will correct your deeds for you and forgive your sins. Whoever obeys Allāh has greatly succeeded."* [Surah Ahzāb (33), verses 70,7 1]

The command to adopt taqwa (*piety*) is repeated four times in these three verses, which emphasises its importance.

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا ٱلْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَن يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا
وَحَمَلَهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴿٧٢﴾ لِّيُعَذِّبَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتِ
وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَٱلْمُشْرِكَٰتِ وَيَتُوبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ
غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٧٣﴾

(72) Verily We have presented the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and cringed at the thought. So man bore it, for indeed, he is extremely unjust and ignorant. (73) So that Allāh may punish the hypocritical men, hypocritical women, polytheistic men and polytheistic women and forgive the believing men and believing women. Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

MAN BEARS THE 'TRUST' AFTER THE HEAVENS, THE EARTH AND THE MOUNTAINS SHRINK FROM THE TASK

Allāh says, *"Verily We have presented the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and cringed at the thought."* The commentators have tendered several interpretations of the "trust". Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه is of the opinion that it refers to fulfilling Allāh's commands, i.e. the Farāidh (*obligations*).

When Allāh presented this responsibility to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, they asked, "What will be the outcome if we choose to accept the responsibility of fulfilling these obligation?" Allāh told them that they will be handsomely rewarded if they fulfil the task, but will be punished for disobedience. Hearing this, these mighty creations shrank away from the task saying, "We cannot cope with this. We rather not have any reward and no

punishment either."

Allāh has the power to grant speech and understanding to whichever creation He wills. Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Do you not see that all within the heavens and the earth prostrate to Allāh, as well as the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the beasts and many people. And there are many who justly deserve punishment. There is none to honour the person whom Allāh humiliates. Indeed, Allāh does as He pleases."* [*Surah 22, verse 18*]

Allāh says in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, *"Thereafter, Allāh turned to the sky, which was smoke, and said to it, as well as to the earth, 'Come to Us willingly or unwillingly.' Both replied, 'We shall come willingly.'"* [*Surah 41, verse 11*]

Referring to the rocks, Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"There are even those that fall out of fear for Allāh."* The reality of the matter is that Allāh has granted perception and understanding to many of His creation, but we are unaware of this because of our inability to understand and communicate with them.

Bukhari (*v. 2 p. 585*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Uhud is a mountain that loves us and we love it."

Sayyidina Jābir bin Samura رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I recognise a rock in Makkah that used to greet me when I was made a Holy Prophet." [*Muslim v. 2 p. 245*]

AN EXPLANATION OF "TRUST"

"So man bore it. Indeed, he is extremely unjust and ignorant." Unlike the other creation, man accepted the responsibility of fulfilling Allāh's commands. Commentators mention that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was given the choice, which he accepted in anticipation of the rewards. He did not pay much attention to the consequences if not bearing the responsibility. He was bound to accept the duty because he was created for vicegerency on earth.

While certain commentators say that this incident took place on the day of the "Mist" pledge, others say that it occurred before this. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr bin Ās رضى الله عنه says that Allāh first created man's sexual organ, telling him that it is a trust, which he should not misappropriate by utilising it in Harām (*prohibited / unlawful*) avenues. Allāh told him that Allāh will protect him if he protects this organ. In a similar manner, the eyes, ears, hands, tongue and the other organs and limbs of the body are all trusts and should be used only as Allāh commands. ["Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 22 p. 96-981

Explaining the verse, *"O you who believe, do not betray Allāh and the messenger and do not knowingly betray your mutual trusts"*, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that Allāh should not be betrayed by neglecting the Farāidh (*obligation commands*) and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should not be betrayed by neglecting the Sunnah. [*Durrul Manthūr v. 3 p. 178*]

This verse also commands people not to betray their trusts. The implication of this word is extremely broad, covering a vast spectrum of things. The most common form of trusts is that which is placed in someone's care to look after for a while. The person in whose trust the article is left should ensure that he

safeguards it and returns it when the owner demands. Partners must also treat the property of their partners as trusts and debtors should duly pay their debts, which are a form of trust. Like these, there are numerous other examples of trusts.

Fear for Allāh and concern for the Hereafter will induce people to fulfil their trusts because they will not be interested only in the material gains of this world. Leaders and statesmen should take heed that their positions and offices are also trusts, which they must dutifully attend to with the utmost diligence. One who misappropriates a trust will suffer grievous consequences in the Hereafter.

Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Verily Allāh instructs you to restore trusts to their rightful owners."* [*Surah 4, verse 58*]

Allāh says towards the end of Surah Baqara, *"If any of you entrust another, then let him who is trusted deliver what is entrusted to him and let him fear Allāh."* [*Surah 2, verse 283*]

Describing the attributes of the pious believers *(Mu'minīn)*, Allāh says in Surah Mu'minūn and Surah Ma'ārij, *"And those who give due regard to trusts and their pledges..."*

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that there were very few occasions when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not say in his sermons, "There is no belief *(Imān)* in the person who is not trustworthy and no religion in the one who does not keep promises." More details on fulfilling trusts have been mentioned in the commentary of the verse of Surah Nisā, where Allāh says, *"Verily Allāh instructs you to restore trusts to their rightful owners."* [*Surah 4, verse 58*]

"So man bore it, for indeed, he is extremely unjust and ignorant." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that man is unjust to himself and ignorant because he did not consider the consequences of the responsibility. The verse is a generalisation because there are many men who do not fall into this category, like the Prophets عليهم السلام, the pious saints and religious scholars.

Elucidating the plight of people, Allāh then says, *"So that Allāh may punish the hypocritical men, hypocritical women, polytheistic men and polytheistic women and forgive the believing men and believing women. Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Allāh does not make mention of the disbelievers because, since the hypocrites will be punished despite their claim to Islām, it follows that the disbelievers will also be punished because they openly deny Islām.

Allāh says that He will forgive the believers *(Mu'minīn)* instead of saying that He will have mercy on them. This has been mentioned to tell man that there is still hope for the sinners as well. S/he can still benefit from Allāh's mercy after repenting because *"Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Of course, the disbeliever will not be forgiven if he dies as a disbeliever.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

سورة سبا

Makkan	Surah Saba	Verses 54

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ ٱلْحَمْدُ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ وَهُوَ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ (1) يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنزِلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ٱلْغَفُورُ (2) وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَا تَأْتِينَا ٱلسَّاعَةُ ۖ قُلْ بَلَىٰ
وَرَبِّى لَتَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ ۖ لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَلَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَآ أَصْغَرُ مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَآ أَكْبَرُ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ (3) لِّيَجْزِىَ
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ (4)
وَٱلَّذِينَ سَعَوْ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مُعَٰجِزِينَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّن رِّجْزٍ أَلِيمٌ (5) وَيَرَى
ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقَّ وَيَهْدِىٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ
ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَمِيدِ (6)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) All praise belongs to Allāh, to Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. All praise belongs to Him in the Hereafter as well. He is The Wise, the Informed. (2) He knows what enters the earth, what emerges from it, what descends from the sky and what ascends into it. He is the Most Merciful, the Most Forgiving. (3) The disbelievers say, "Judgment day (Qiyāmah) will never dawn upon us. " Say, "Why not? By my Lord! It will definitely dawn upon you. My Lord possesses the knowledge of the unseen. Not even the weight of an atom in the heavens and the earth can hide from Him. Even everything smaller and larger is in the Clear Book." (4) (Judgment day (Qiyāmah) shall come) so that Allāh may reward those who believe and work righteous deeds. Theirs shall be forgiveness and a bountiful sustenance. (5) Those who exert themselves to defeat Our verses, theirs shall be a punishment

of painful proportions. (6) Those granted knowledge will realise that what has been revealed to you from your Lord is the truth and guides to the path of the Mighty, Most Praiseworthy.

ALLĀH IS WORTHY OF ALL PRAISE AND HAS KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYTHING

Saba was the name of a nation that occupied Yemen. Verses 15 to 21 of this Surah discusses the good fortune they enjoyed, which was reversed when they disobeyed Allāh.

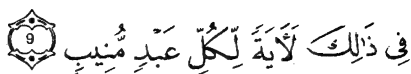
Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"All praise belongs to Allāh, to Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. All praise belongs to Him in the Hereafter as well."* Some of the attributes that make Him Worthy of all praise are *"He is The Wise, the Informed."* Every decision and law of His is replete with wisdom, and nothing can be hidden from Him.

Thereafter, details of His all-encompassing knowledge are mentioned. Allāh says, *"He knows what enters the earth, what emerges from it, what descends from the sky and what ascends into it. He is the Most Merciful, the Most Forgiving."*

Allāh then rebuts the notion of the disbelievers. Allāh says, *"The disbelievers say, 'Judgment day (Qiyāmah) will never dawn upon us.' Say, 'Why not? By my Lord! It will definitely dawn upon you. My Lord possesses the knowledge of the un seen. Not even the weight of an atom in the heavens and the earth can hide from Him. Even everything smaller and larger is in the Clear Book.'"* This verse tells the disbelievers that Allāh has perfect knowledge about the whereabouts of every atom, wherever it may be. He is therefore perfectly capable of assembling the atoms of every living being, which may have dispersed and decomposed after death.

Allāh then discusses the necessity for Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* when he says, *"So that Allāh may reward those who believe and work righteous deeds. Theirs shall be forgiveness and a bountiful sustenance."* On the other hand, *"Those who exert themselves to defeat Our verses, theirs shall be a punishment of painful proportions."* This verse refers to those disbelievers who oppose the Muslims and make every attempt to refute and disprove the beliefs of Islām.

Allāh then praises men of learning when He says, *"Those granted knowledge will realise that what has been revealed to you from your Lord (i.e. the Qur'ān) is the truth and guides to the path of the Mighty, Most Praiseworthy."*

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ هَلْ نَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ إِذَا مُزِّقْتُمْ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ إِنَّكُمْ لَفِى
خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿7﴾ أَفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَم بِهِۦ جِنَّةٌۢ ۗ بَلِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ فِى
ٱلْعَذَابِ وَٱلضَّلَٰلِ ٱلْبَعِيدِ ﴿8﴾ أَفَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ إِن نَّشَأْ نَخْسِفْ بِهِمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ أَوْ نُسْقِطْ عَلَيْهِمْ كِسَفًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۚ إِنَّ

(7) The disbelievers say, "Should we lead you to a man who says that when you have been completely reduced to fragments, you will reappear as a new creation?" (8) "Does he invent lies about Allāh, or is he insane?" Instead, those who do not believe in the Hereafter are in punishment and a distant deviation. (9) Do they not look at the sky and the earth before them and behind them? If We will, We could sink them into the ground or cause a portion of the sky to fall on them. There are certainly signs in this for every penitent slave.

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE DISBELIEVERS FOR REJECTING THE ADVENT OF QIYĀMAH (*DOOMSDAY*)

Those disbelievers who rejected the advent of Qiyāmah (*doomsday*) used to tell people about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Should we lead you to a man who says that when you have been completely reduced to fragments, you will reappear as a new creation?"* in this way, they meant to ridicule the belief in resurrection.

They further said most insolently, *"Does he invent lies about Allāh* (by attributing the message to Allāh), *or is he insane?"* Of course, both of these allegations are false. Allāh replies to them saying, *'instead, those who do not believe in the Hereafter are in punishment and a distant deviation."*

"Do they not look at the sky and the earth before them and behind them?" Allāh impresses upon their minds that it is not difficult task for Him to simply re-create men since He is most Capable of accomplishing feats much greater than this, like creating the vast heavens and the earth.

The same point was driven home in Surah Mu'min, where Allāh says, *"The creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater feat than the creation of mankind, but most people do not know."* [*Surah 40, verse 57*]

Allāh says in Surah Yā Sī n, *"Does the One Who created the heavens and the earth not have the power to create the likes of them? Why not? He is the Prolific Creator, the All Knowing."* [*Surah 36, verse 81*]

A verse of Surah Ahqāf reads: *"Do they not see that Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth and did not tire from creating them has the power to give life to the dead? Certainly! Allāh has power over all things."* [*Surah 46, verse 33*]

Allāh continues to say, *"If We will, We could sink them into the ground or cause a portion of the sky to fall on them."* As punishment for the rejection of the disbelievers who refuse to witness Allāh's signs, Allāh can sink them into the ground or crush them with a flying piece of meteorite. They should never be fooled by the fact that they have not yet been punished.

Allāh concludes the verse by saying, *"There are certainly signs in this for every penitent slave* (who seeks the truth)."

ٱعْمَلْ سَٰبِغَٰتٍ وَقَدِّرْ فِى ٱلسَّرْدِ ۖ وَٱعْمَلُوا۟ صَٰلِحًا ۖ إِنِّى بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾
وَلِسُلَيْمَٰنَ ٱلرِّيحَ غُدُوُّهَا شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ ۖ وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُۥ عَيْنَ ٱلْقِطْرِ ۖ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ مَن
يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِۦ ۖ وَمَن يَزِغْ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِنَا نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ
﴿١٢﴾ يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُۥ مَا يَشَآءُ مِن مَّحَٰرِيبَ وَتَمَٰثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَٱلْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رَّاسِيَٰتٍ ۚ
ٱعْمَلُوٓا۟ ءَالَ دَاوُۥدَ شُكْرًا ۚ وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِىَ ٱلشَّكُورُ ﴿١٣﴾

(10) Verily, We granted Dawūd a great bounty from Us. "O mountains! Repeat (the Tasbīh) with Dawūd. And the birds were also given the command. We also made iron soft for him. (11) "Make coats of armour, perfect the links and you all should do good deeds. I am certainly watching whatever you do." (12) We subjugated the wind for Sulaymān. Its travel in the morning was a month's journey and its travel by the evening was a month's journey. We also caused a spring of copper to flow for him. There were those of the Jinn who used to work before him by the command of his Lord. Those of them who reneged against Our command, We would make them taste the punishment of the Blaze. (13) As he pleased, they would construct for him huge buildings, statues, dishes the size of dams and large pots which could not be moved from their place. "O family of Dawūd! Express your thanks. Few of My bondsmen are thankful."

THE BOUNTIES OF ALLĀH ON SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام AND SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام

In the foregoing verses, Allāh mentions some of the bounties that He bestowed on Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام and his son, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. They have been mentioned in verses 78 to 82 of Surah Anbiya (*Surah 21*) and will also be mentioned in verses 17 to 40 of Surah Sād (*Surah 38*).

THE MOUNTAINS AND BIRDS ENGAGE IN TASBĪH

Allāh mentions that He commanded the mountains and the birds to repeat the Tasbīh with Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. A verse of Surah Sād says, *"Verily, We subjugated the mountains with him, who would glorify Allāh by evening and at daybreak. We also subjugated the birds, who all gathered together. They were all penitent towards Allāh."* [*Surah 38, verse 18, 19*]

Many verses state that all Allāh's creation engage in Tasbīh (Allāh's glorification) in their unique manners, but the mountains and birds were specifically commanded to join in the Tasbīh that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام recited. This was a miracle because they all spoke the same words as he did.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that they [the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم] could hear the Tasbīh of the food they ate. [*"Mishkāt" p. 538*]

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was gifted with an extremely beautiful voice, and

the mountains and birds would join him as he hymned Allāh's glory and praise. Describing the beautiful voice of Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "He has been granted a part of Sayyidina Dawūd's عليه السلام melodious voice." ["Mishkāt" p. 575]

THE SOFTENING OF IRON

Allāh says further that he made iron soft for Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. Allāh then commanded him saying, *'Make coats of armour, perfect the links..."* People used to merely fasten sheets of iron onto their backs and chests when fighting in battle. This served as armour for them (but was extremely uncomfortable). Allāh taught Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام how to make armour from many links (so that it becomes flexible).

Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"We taught Dawūd the skill of making armour, so that it protects you in your wars. Will you be grateful?"* [*Surah 21, verse 80*]

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 505*) reports that after Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام became king, he used to disguise himself and patrol the streets asking people what they thought of their king Dawūd. They were all very satisfied with his rule. One day, Allāh sent an angel in the form of a human being, to whom Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام posed the same question. The angel admitted that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was a good person, but added that he had one deficiency. When Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام asked him what the deficiency was, the angel said, "He eats from the state treasury and feeds his family from it."

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام then prayed to Allāh to arrange some means by which he could earn his own income. Allāh taught him the craft of making armour and, as a special favour, made iron so soft for him that he did not require to melt it or to pound it. It was like wax in his hands, which he could mould as he pleased. He made a set of armour each day, which he sold for four thousand Dirhams (or six thousand, according to other narrations). In this way he could fulfil the needs of himself and his family. Then he was also able to give charity to the poor of the Bani Isrā'īl.

Sayyidina Miqdād bin Ma'dikarib رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A person cannot eat better than the earnings of his hand. Indeed, Allāh's Holy Prophet, Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, used to eat from the toil of his own hand." [*Bukhari p. 278*]

Allāh also commanded Sayyidina Dawūd's عليه السلام family saying, *"and you all should do good deeds. I am certainly watching whatever you do."*

THE SUBJUGATION OF THE WIND

Allāh granted Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام the bounty of commanding the wind to transport him and his army wherever they needed to go. It was so fast that in single morning or evening, it transported them a distance that would normally take a month to travel. This is implied by the verse, *"We subjugated the wind for Sulaymān. Its travel in the morning was a month 's journey and its travel by the evening was a month 's journey."*

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه that

Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام used to leave Damascus by the morning and reach Istakhar by the evening. From there, he would reach Kabul by the next morning. Each of these distances would take a month to travel by horse. Some commentators say that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام used to eat breakfast at Ray and lunch at Samarqand.

THE COPPER SPRING

Allāh continues to say, *"We also caused a spring of copper to flow for him."* Whereas copper is usually mined as a hard metal, Allāh made liquid copper flow from a spring for Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that this spring was in Yemen.

THE SERVITUDE OF THE JINN

"There were those of the Jinn who used to work before him by the command of his Lord. Those of them who reneged against Our command, We would make them taste the punishment of the Blaze." In this way, the Jinn were bound to follow the commands of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام.

"As he pleased, they would construct for him huge buildings..." Some commentators have translated the word 'maharīb' (translated above as *"huge buildings")* as 'palaces,' some as 'homes,' and others translate it as 'lofty balconies/towers.'

In addition to this, they also made *"statues"* out of copper, glass and white stone.

They also made *"dishes the size of dams and large pots which could not be moved from their place."* "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 552*) reports that these dishes were so large that a thousand people ate from each of them. The pots were permanent structures, which could be reached only with stairs. If the dishes were so large, one can well imagine the size of the pots.

THE COMMAND TO BE GRATEFUL

Allāh commands Sayyidina Dawūd's عليه السلام family saying, *"O family of Dawūd! Express your thanks."* Thanks is expressed verbally as well as practically, i.e. by being obedient to Allāh's commands. However, Allāh adds, *"Few of My bondsmen are thankful."*

Bukhari reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the best fast is that of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام who fasted every alternate day. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said that the Tahajjud (night) Salāh of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was most beloved to Allāh. He slept for the first half of the night, performed Salāh for a third of the night, and then slept again for the remaining quarter.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Thābit Banāni رحمة الله عليه that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام used to distribute the hours among his family so that someone was engaged in Allāh's worship throughout the day and night.

STATUES AND PICTURES ARE HARĀM (*PROHIBITED*) IN THE SHARI'AH OF SAYYIDINA MUHAMMAD صلى الله عليه وسلم

Many people who adore pictures and statues, quote the above verse in support of the permissibility of these things. They fail to understand that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was most learned about the teachings of the Qur'ān. Since he declared these things as Harām (*unlawful*), who can contest it in the light of the Qur'ān?

The fact of the matter is that many acts were permissible for the people of the previous Ummahs (*nations*), but have been declared Harām (*unlawful*) for the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is nothing astonishing because certain things were even abrogated in The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Shari'ah it self. Almost everyone knows that liquor was Halāl (*lawful*) during the initial stages of Islām but it was declared Harām (*unlawful*) subsequently.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the people who make pictures will receive the worst punishment from Allāh. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 8 80*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that every picture-maker will be in Hell, where his picture will be given life to punish him. [*"Mishkāt" p. 385*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The picture-makers will be punished on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. They will be asked to give life to their pictures." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said that the angels do not enter the house where pictures are displayed. [*Bukhari p. 881*]

Besides the above Ahadīth of Bukhari, there are many others which forbid taking pictures. These Ahadīth are so many in number that one cannot doubt the authenticity of the prohibition. People make the preposterous claim that pictures are no longer forbidden because the original reason for prohibition has disappeared. Without a trace of proof, they foolishly claim that pictures were forbidden only to remove the love of idols from the hearts of Makkan polytheists.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never expressed this reason, but said that on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, Allāh will severely punish those who attempt to imitate Allāh' s creative powers.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Allāh says, "*Who can be a greater oppressor than the person who ascribes a partner to Me in My creative powers? If anyone is able to create, then let him create an atom, a grain or a single barley.*" [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 880*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, a neck will appear from Hell with eyes to see with, ears to hear with and a tongue to speak with. It will say, 'I have been appointed (to punish) three persons (viz.)

- *Every person who is a rebellious oppressor.*

📖 *Every person who worships another with Allāh.*

📖 *Every picture-maker."'* [*Tirmidhi*]

A clean-shaven person wearing a suit and resembling a Christian once argued with me, saying that the camera was only invented about a century-and-a-half ago. I replied, "If a person perpetrates a sin knowing it to be a sin, then he should repent and will be guided. By attempting to legalise a sinful act, the sin will be doubled and the act will still remain a sin. By regarding it as lawful, he will also not be inspired to repent. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not specify any instrument (by which a picture is made). He did not specify that pictures have to be hand drawn when he said that the angels will not enter houses displaying pictures. He did not say that the angels do not mind if the picture is created by an instrument. He also did not say that pictures taken with an instrument will not be regarded as 'imitating Allāh's creation."'

فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ ٱلْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَوْتِهِۦٓ إِلَّا دَآبَّةُ ٱلْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنسَأَتَهُۥ ۖ فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ ٱلْجِنُّ أَن لَّوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ٱلْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا۟ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْمُهِينِ ﴿١٤﴾

(14) When We decreed death for him [Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام], it was only the termites that made them aware of his demise by eating his staff. When he fell, it became evident to the Jinn that if they had knowledge of the unseen, they would not have remained in a humiliating punishment.

THE JINN DO NOT POSSESS KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNSEEN, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN AWARE OF SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN'S عليه السلام DEMISE

The Jinn laboured hard at the command of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. Some of them were even bound in chains, as mentioned in Surah Sād. One day, while sitting on his throne, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام was watching the Jinn at work with his chin resting on his staff. In this condition Allāh took his life. The Jinn continued to labour hard, thinking that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام was still watching them.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that the senior Jinn claimed that they possessed knowledge of the unseen, which their juniors believed. As he remained sitting on the throne, termites began to eat at his staff. Eventually, after a year, the staff collapsed and Sayyidina Sulaymān's عليه السلام body fell. It was only then that the Jinn realised that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام had passed away. When they assessed the time that the termites took to eat at the staff, they learnt that a complete year had passed since the demise. It then occurred to them *"that if they had knowledge of the unseen, they would not have remained in a humiliating punishment."* *i.e.* they would then not have laboured so hard all this while, causing themselves humiliation. It then became evident to one and all that the Jinn were false in their claim to possess knowledge of the unseen.

Only Allāh has knowledge of the unseen, not even the Prophets عليهم السلام or

the pious saints. Allāh gave them whatever knowledge they did have of certain events of the future. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Allāh does not inform you of the unseen, but Allāh chooses whom He pleases from His messengers* (to confer some of this knowledge to them)." [*Surah 3, verse 179*]

لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكَنِهِمْ ءَايَةٌ جَنَّتَانِ عَن يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ كُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَٱشْكُرُوا لَهُۥ بَلْدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ ﴿15﴾ فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ ٱلْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنَٰهُم بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتَىْ أُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَأَثْلٍ وَشَىْءٍ مِّن سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ ﴿16﴾ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَيْنَٰهُم بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَهَلْ نُجَٰزِىٓ إِلَّا ٱلْكَفُورَ ﴿17﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ ٱلْقُرَى ٱلَّتِى بَٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا قُرًى ظَٰهِرَةً وَقَدَّرْنَا فِيهَا ٱلسَّيْرَ سِيرُوا فِيهَا لَيَالِىَ وَأَيَّامًا ءَامِنِينَ ﴿18﴾ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا بَٰعِدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوٓا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ وَمَزَّقْنَٰهُمْ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿19﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَدَّقَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُۥ فَٱتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿20﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُۥ عَلَيْهِم مِّن سُلْطَٰنٍ إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِمَّنْ هُوَ مِنْهَا فِى شَكٍّ وَرَبُّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَفِيظٌ ﴿21﴾

(15) There was certainly a sign for the people of Saba in their settlements. There were two orchards, lying on the right and the left. "Eat from the provision of your Lord and be grateful to Him. A beautiful city and a Forgiving Lord." (16) They turned away in aversion, so We sent the flood of the dam and We replaced their two orchards with two orchards of foul smelling fruit, tamarisks and a sparse few lotus trees. (17) This was the punishment We gave them for their disbelief. We punish only the extremely ungrateful ones. (18) Between them and the towns that We blessed, We made several conspicuous villages and made their journey in easy stages. "Travel peacefully by then by night and by day." (19) However, they said, "O our Lord! Make our journeys longer." They oppressed themselves, so We made them mere narratives and shattered them into fragments. There are definitely signs in this for every person who is extremely patient and extremely grateful. (20) Iblīs (Chief Devil) certainly found his expectation about them to be true, so all of them followed him besides a group of believers. (21) He cannot wield any power over them, except that We discern those who believe in the Hereafter from those who are in doubt about it. Your Lord is Watchful over everything.

ALLĀH'S BOUNTIES TO THE PEOPLE OF SABA AND ALLĀH'S PUNISHMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR INGRATITUDE

Saba (also known as Sheba) was a nation in Yemen, whose name was

derived from that of their forefather, Saba bin Yashjab. They were all the descendants of Ya'rab bin Qahtān. They lived in city called Ma'rib, which was located at a three-day's journey east of San'ā. Describing their fortune, Allāh says, *"There was certainly a sign for the people of Saba in their settlements. There were two orchards, lying on the right and the left.* (Allāh commanded them saying) *'Eat from the provision of your Lord and be grateful to Him.'"*

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from "Majma'ul Buldān" that the people of Saba lived in thirteen suburbs and Allāh sent a Prophet to each of these thirteen with the message, *"Eat from the provision of your Lord and be grateful to Him."*

"A beautiful city and a Forgiving Lord." The city had abundant water, fertile soil, and was free from pests and insect vermin. However, they became enamoured of these bounties and failed to perceive that Allāh had granted all to them. Allāh says, *"They turned away in aversion, so We sent the flood of the dam..."* Allāh caused their dam to burst its walls, thereby destroying everything they possessed in the ensuing flood.

Their flourishing orchards were also destroyed. Allāh describes the change of scenery saying, "We replaced their two orchards with two orchards of foul smelling (and bitter) fruit, tamarisks and a sparse few lotus trees."

Allāh says, *"This was the punishment We gave them for their disbelief We punish only the extremely ungrateful ones."* The *"extremely ungrateful ones"* refer to all disbelievers and polytheistics as well as those claimants to Islām who are disobedient to Allāh. Allāh allows people grace to revel in their bounties. Eventually, when their disobedience transgresses all limits, and they fail to mend their ways, Allāh punishes them.

Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"Allāh cites the similitude of a town that was peaceful and tranquil. Their provision came to them in abundance from every avenue, but they were ungrateful for Allāh's bounty and, because of their actions, Allāh caused them to taste the attire of hunger and fear. Indeed messengers came to them from their midst, but they denied them, because of which a punishment afflicted them while they were oppressive."* [*Surah 16, verses 112 and 113*]

Further describing their ingratitude, Allāh says, *"Between them and the towns that We blessed, We made several conspicuous villages..."*

These towns were all situated on the roadside and the people of Saba could easily enter them without disrupting or prolonging the journey. Each town could be seen from the previous town, because of which their journeys were never monotonous and they could stay over at a town during any stage of the journey.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that *"the towns that We blessed"* refers to the towns of Shām (*Syria*) to which the people of Saba travelled. Other commentators say that *"the towns that We blessed"* referred to the large cities of the people of Saba, while the *"several conspicuous villages"* refers to the smaller villages around these cities.

Allāh says further that He *"made their journey in easy stages."* Allāh divided their journeys into easy stages, e.g. if one of them left his town in the morning, he

would reach the next town by midday, and if he had to leave there after lunch, he would reach the next town by the evening. In this way, they never needed to carry food with them. They also had no enemies to fear. Other commentators have mentioned that each village was merely a mile away from the next.

Allāh addressed them saying, *"Travel peacefully by them* (i.e. by these east stages) *by night and by day."* They had nothing to fear on their journeys by day and by night.

"However, they said, 'O our Lord! Make our journeys longer.' They oppressed themselves, so We made them mere narratives (i.e. to be remembered only in stories) and shattered them into fragments." When people are blessed with many bounties, they tend to become boastful and proud and lose their appreciation for these bounties. The people of Saba disobeyed Allāh and became rebellious. Eventually, they even stooped to the depth of cursing themselves and wishing ill for themselves.

They became proud and disliked that everyone should be blessed by Allāh's bounties because they could then not think highly of themselves. They figured that if distances are widened, everyone would be unable to travel distances to purchase merchandise. Only the rich would then be able to prosper, which was what they wanted. The poor would then became dependent on the rich and be subservient to them. This supplication was to their detriment, which Allāh describes as oppression upon their own souls.

Allāh then destroyed them, reducing their properties to dust. All that now remains of their once thriving civilization are *"narratives"* from which people should take lesson.

Allāh then says, *"There are definitely signs in this for every person who is extremely patient and extremely grateful."*

"Iblīs (Chief Devil) certainly found his expectation about them to be true, so all of them followed him besides a group of believers. He (Iblīs) cannot wield any power over them..." The only reason for the sway that he has over them is for Allāh to *"discern those who believe in the Hereafter from those who are in doubt about it."* Allāh has granted every person the choice to do good and also to do evil. Man is tested by the instigation of Shaytān (*Satan*). In this manner, Allāh tests the belief *(Imān)* of every man.

As Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was sent to this world, Allāh said to him, *"We said, 'Go down from here, one and all. If there ever comes to you any guidance from Me, then whoever will follow My guidance shall have no fear on them, neither shall they grieve. Those who disbelieve and falsify shall be the dwellers of the Fire, where they will abide forever."* [*Surah Baqara (2), verses 38, 39*]

As man came into this world, he brought this choice with him. The Prophets عليهم السلام frequented the world to remind man about Allāh and even displayed various miracles. In this manner, people had no choice but to accept the teachings of these Prophets عليهم السلام. Despite all of this, there were still many who doubted them and failed to believe in the Hereafter.

Although Satan *(Shaytān)* has powers to persuade man, these powers are limited and cannot force man to do anything. The final choice still rests with the person.

قُلِ ٱدْعُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَلَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِيهِمَا مِن شِرْكٍ وَمَا لَهُۥ مِنْهُم مِّن ظَهِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَلَا تَنفَعُ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةُ عِندَهُۥٓ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُۥ ۚ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فُزِّعَ عَن قُلُوبِهِمْ قَالُوا۟ مَاذَا قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ ٱلْحَقَّ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿٢٣﴾

(22) Say, "Call those whom you worship besides Allāh. They have no control over an atom's weight in the heavens or in the earth. They do not even share any partnership in the two, and none of them are assistants to Allāh." (23) Intercession cannot profit in His presence, save for the one whom He permits. Until the time comes when fear leaves their hearts, they say, "What has your Lord said?" The reply is, "(He speaks) the truth and He is the Exalted, the Great.

THE GODS OF THE POLYTHEISTS HAVE NO POWERS AND NO AUTHORITY

Allāh says, *"Say, 'Call those whom you worship besides Allāh. (If you will do so, you will discover that) They have no control over an atom 's weight in the heavens or in the earth. They do not even share any partnership in the two, and none of them are assistants to Allāh."'* These gods have no say in the creation of Allāh and the preservation of Allāh's creation.

In reply to the notion of the polytheists that their gods will intercede for them in Allāh's court, Allāh says, *"Intercession cannot profit in His presence, save for the one whom He permits."* Even the likes of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام, and the angels (all of whom are also regarded as gods by some) cannot intercede on behalf of those who perpetrate polytheism *(shirk).*

Speaking about the intercession of the angels, Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"and only the one with whom He is pleased will be able to intercede. They tremble with fear for Him."* [*Surah 21, verse 28*]

Thereafter, Allāh describes the fear and reverence that the angels have for Him. Allāh says, *"Until the time comes when fear leaves their hearts* (after Allāh passes a command to them), *they say* (to each other), *'What has your Lord said?' The reply is,* '(He speaks) *the truth and He is the Exalted, the Great.* - When the angels have such awe for Allāh, how can it be expected that they will force their intercession on Allāh?

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When any decree is issued in the heavens, the angels, because of their humility and obedience to Allāh, begin beating and flapping their wings so much that the heavens resound with a noise resembling the pulling of chains across a smooth rock. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 709*]·Then, *'when fear leaves their hearts, they say, 'What has your Lord said?' The reply is, '(He speaks) the truth and He is the Exalted, the Great."*

۞ قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَإِنَّآ أَوْ إِيَّاكُمْ لَعَلَىٰ

هُدًى أَوْ فِي ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿24﴾ قُل لَّا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّآ أَجْرَمْنَا وَلَا نُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿25﴾ قُلْ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا رَبُّنَا ثُمَّ يَفْتَحُ بَيْنَنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَهُوَ ٱلْفَتَّاحُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿26﴾
قُلْ أَرُونِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَلْحَقْتُم بِهِۦ شُرَكَآءَ ۖ كَلَّا ۚ بَلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿27﴾

(24) Say, "Who sustains you from the heavens and the earth? Say, "Allāh! Either we or you are certainly correctly guided or clearly misguided. (25) Say, "You will not be questioned about the sins we perpetrate and we will not be questioned about what you do." (26) Say, "Our Lord will gather us and then decide between us with the truth. He is certainly the Best Judge, the All Knowing." (27) Say, "Show me those whom you ascribe as partners (to Allāh). Never! But He is Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise."

JUDGEMENT WILL BE PASSED ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

These verses establish belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*. Allāh begins by saying, *"Say, 'Who sustains you from the heavens* (by sending the rains) *and the earth* (when it sprouts forth all types of vegetation)? *Say, 'Allāh (does this)!"* Even the polytheists are forced to admit that these things happen by Allāh's will.

Allāh instructs further that the polytheists be told, *"Either we or you are certainly correctly guided or clearly misguided."* Since the polytheists reject oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and the Muslims accept oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, Only one party can be correct. It is obvious that those whose belief is correct will be successful in the Hereafter. Therefore, the polytheists are urged to reconsider their stance. They must revise the proofs of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to realise whether they are rightly guided or misguided. When they reach the Hereafter, it will be too late to make amends because they will then be doomed to eternity in Hell.

"Say, 'You will not be questioned about the sins we perpetrate and we will not be questioned about what you do. - Every person will have to answer for himself. However, to safeguard people from Hell, the Muslims must continue to invite the disbelievers to Islām.

"Say, 'Our Lord will gather us and then decide between us with the truth. He is certainly the Best Judge, the All Knowing." The disbelievers will learn the error of their ways when they will be condemned to Hell, while the believers *(Mu'minīn)* are welcomed in Heaven. Allāh's decision can never be questioned because He is aware of even the finest details of every person.

"Say, 'Show me those whom you ascribe as partners (to Allāh)." This question is prompted to make it clear to the polytheists that their gods are all part of Allāh's creation and cannot be deserving of worship.

"Never!" i.e. Allāh can never have a partner. None can be equal to Him in any regard, *"But He is Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise."*

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا كَآفَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

(28) We have sent you to the whole of mankind only as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. But most people do not know.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم HAS BEEN SENT TO ALL OF MANKIND

This verse announces that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is a Prophet to all of mankind. It is therefore compulsory for every person to follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh will never be satisfied with a person who does not follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, even though he may engage in excessive worship. Good deeds will be accepted only when they are coupled with belief in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Allāh's final Prophet.

Allāh also says in Surah A'rāf, *"Say, 'O people! Indeed to all of you I am a messenger of that Allāh to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. There is no deity besides Him and He gives life and death. So believe in Allāh and His messenger, the unlettered Prophet who believes in Allāh and His words. And follow him so that you may be rightly guided."* [*Surah 7, verse 158*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have been granted five things that no other has been granted before me, namely:

1. I have been assisted with an awe. The enemy is afraid of me at a month's distance.
2. The entire earth has been made a place of Salāh and purification for me. (Salāh can be performed anywhere and, in the absence of water, a person may use sand to purify himself). Wherever any person of my Ummah finds the time for Salāh, he should perform it.
3. The spoils of war have been permitted for me and it was never permitted for any other before me.
4. I have been granted the privilege of intercession (when he will intercede on behalf of the entire creation on the Day of Judgement).
5. Before me the Holy Prophets were sent especially to their nations, but I have been sent to the entire humanity." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 48*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "By Allāh! The person, be he a Jew or a Christian, who does not believe in me after hearing of me shall be of the inmates of Hell." [*Muslim v. 1 p. 86*]

Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Definitely the only religion with Allāh is Islām."* [*Surah 3, verse 19*]

Verse 85 also of Surah Āl Imrān reads: *"Whoever seeks a religion besides Islām, it shall never be accepted from him, and he will be, in the Hereafter, among the losers."* [*Surah 3, verse 85*]

Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم appeared in the world, it became incumbent for adherents of all religions to follow him, whether they be Jews, Christians, Sabians, etc.

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قُل لَّكُم مِّيعَادُ يَوْمٍ لَّا
تَسْتَأْخِرُونَ عَنْهُ سَاعَةً وَلَا تَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

(29) They say, "When will this promise be fulfilled, if you are truthful?" (30) Say, "You have an appointment of a day, which you will be unable to postpone for a moment, nor bring forward."

THE TIME FOR JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)* IS FIXED AND CANNOT BE ADJUSTED

Those who reject the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* ask, *"When will this promise* {of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*} *be fulfilled, if you are truthful?"* These people intend to say that, since Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* has not yet occurred, a date has to be set for it, and, if no one is aware of the date, it means that it will never occur. Such reasoning is both foolish and childish.

Allāh replies to them saying, *"Say, 'You have an appointment of a day, which you will be unable to postpone for a moment, nor bring forward."* The fact that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* has not yet arrived does not mean that it will not take place.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَن نُّؤْمِنَ بِهَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَلَا بِالَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ
الظَّالِمُونَ مَوْقُوفُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يَرْجِعُ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ الْقَوْلَ يَقُولُ
الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا لَوْلَا أَنتُمْ لَكُنَّا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالَ الَّذِينَ
اسْتَكْبَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا أَنَحْنُ صَدَدْنَاكُمْ عَنِ الْهُدَىٰ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَكُم ۖ بَلْ كُنتُم
مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا بَلْ مَكْرُ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذْ
تَأْمُرُونَنَا أَن نَّكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَنَجْعَلَ لَهُ أَندَادًا ۚ وَأَسَرُّوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ وَجَعَلْنَا
الْأَغْلَالَ فِي أَعْنَاقِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا
فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَقَالُوا نَحْنُ

أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَٰلًا وَأَوْلَٰدًا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّى يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ
وَيَقْدِرُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَمَآ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُكُم بِٱلَّتِى تُقَرِّبُكُمْ
عِندَنَا زُلْفَىٰٓ إِلَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ جَزَآءُ ٱلضِّعْفِ بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟ وَهُمْ فِى
ٱلْغُرُفَٰتِ ءَامِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَسْعَوْنَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مُعَٰجِزِينَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ
مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّى يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُۥ وَمَآ
أَنفَقْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُۥ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

(31) The disbelievers say, "We shall neither believe in this Qur'ān, nor in the scriptures before it." If only you could see the time when the oppressors will be standing before their Lord. Each one will be passing the blame to the other. Those of a lower status will say to those of a higher status, "If it were not for you, we would have been believers." (32) Those of the higher echelon will reply to those of the lower class saying, "Did we prevent you from the guidance when it came to you? Nay! You were all criminals yourselves." (33) Those of a lower status will say to those of a higher status, "Day and night did your schemes prevent us when you instructed us to disbelieve in Allāh and to ascribe partners to Him." They will suppress their remorse when they see the punishment. We will place yokes upon the necks of the disbelievers. They will be punished only for what they did. (34) Whenever We sent a warner to a town, the affluent people said, "We disbelieve in what has been sent with you. (35) They said, "We possess more wealth and more children than you. We can never be punished." (36) Say, "Verily my Lord increases sustenance for whoever He wills and straitens, but most people do not know." (37) Your wealth and children are not such that they can draw you closer to Us, except for him who believes and does good deeds. For these people there shall be a double reward on account of what they do, and they shall rest peacefully on balconies. (38) Those who exert themselves to defeat Our verses, these people will be presented for punishment. (39) Say, "Verily my Lord increases sustenance for whoever of His bondsmen He wills and straitens for him. Whatever good you spend, Allāh will follow it with a reward. He is the best of sustainers."

THE PATHETIC CONDITION OF THE DISBELIEVERS AND THEIR DISPUTE IN THE HEREAFTER

The above verses depict a scene of Qiyāmah (*doomsday*), when all the disbelievers will witness the punishment before them. An altercation will then ensue between those people who belonged to the lower class in this world and who were subservient to the more affluent and influential people of a higher social standing. Allāh says, *"If only you could see the time when the oppressors will be standing before their Lord. Each one will be passing the blame to the other. Those of a lower status will say to those of a higher status, 'If it were not for you, we would have been believers.'"*

"Those of the higher echelon will reply to those of the lower class saying, 'Did we prevent you from the guidance when it came to you? Nay! You were all criminals yourselves."' They will claim that they never forced these people to reject Allāh's guidance and to adhere to disbelief.

"Those of a lower status will say to those of a higher status, 'Day and night did your schemes prevent us when you instructed us to disbelieve in Allāh and to ascribe partners to Him."' The followers will still claim that it was the plots and guile of these leaders and influential people that led them into the terrible punishment of the Hereafter.

There will be no escape from Allāh's punishment. *"They will suppress their remorse when they see the punishment (in an effort not to express it). We will place yokes upon the necks of the disbelievers. They will be punished only for what they did."* One will not suffer any punishment for a sin that one did not perpetrate.

Allāh continues to say, *"Whenever We sent a warner to a town, the affluent people said, 'We disbelieve in what has been sent with you."*

Besotted with their possessions, they said, *"We possess more wealth and more children than you. We can never be punished."* They were deceived into thinking that they were the chosen servants of Allāh because Allāh had granted them abundant wealth. They thought that they would also be fortunate in the Hereafter as they seemed to be in this world.

Allāh replies to this false notion when He says, *"Say, 'Verily my Lord increases sustenance for whoever He wills and straitens..."* The fact that Allāh grants more wealth to some people does not necessarily mean that Allāh loves them, just as little wealth does not mean that Allāh dislikes a person. Allāh grants people more or less because of certain reasons, which He knows best and which *"most people do not know."*

Allāh then states a general rule when He says, *"Your wealth and children are not such that they can draw you closer to Us, except for him who believes and does good deeds. For these people there shall be a double reward on account of what they do, and they shall rest peacefully on balconies."* The fortunate believers *(Mu'minīn)*, who utilise their wealth in correct ways, will receive grand rewards from Allāh because of their belief *(Imān)* and good deeds.

On the other hand, *"Those who exert themselves to defeat Our verses* {by raising objections and mocking the believers *(Mu'minīn)*}, *these people will be presented for punishment."* While they think that they cannot suffer any consequences for their behaviour, they should remember that they will never be able to escape Allāh' s punishment in the Hereafter.

Allāh then encourages people to spend in His cause when He says, *"Say, 'Verily my Lord increases sustenance for whoever of His bondsmen He wills and straitens for him. Whatever good you spend* (in sincerity), *Allāh will follow it with a reward* (in both worlds). *He is the best of sustainers."'*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports that whenever the sun rises, two angels descend to the earth. The first angel prays, "O Allāh! Grant a good return to the one who spends in charity." The second one prays, "O Allāh! Destroy the

wealth of the miser." [*"Mishkāt" p. 164*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه also narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Spending in charity never diminishes wealth. Allāh will certainly enhance the honour of the person who forgives another person, and will elevate the one who is humble for His sake." [*Muslim p. 321*]

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِيَّاكُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالُوا۟
سُبْحَٰنَكَ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِن دُونِهِم ۖ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ٱلْجِنَّ ۖ أَكْثَرُهُم بِهِم مُّؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾
فَٱلْيَوْمَ لَا يَمْلِكُ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ نَّفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا وَنَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ ذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ
ٱلَّتِى كُنتُم بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ قَالُوا۟ مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ
أَن يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَقَالُوا۟ مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ إِفْكٌ مُّفْتَرًى ۚ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَمَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مِّن كُتُبٍ يَدْرُسُونَهَا ۖ
وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ قَبْلَكَ مِن نَّذِيرٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَكَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَمَا بَلَغُوا۟ مِعْشَارَ مَآ
ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوا۟ رُسُلِى ۖ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٤٥﴾

(40) The day when We shall gather them all, and Allāh will say to the angels, "Are these the ones who used to worship you?" (41) They will say, "You (Allāh) are Pure! You are our Protecting Friend, not them. The fact of is that they used to worship the Jinn, most of them having faith in them." (42) Today, none shall be able to do good or harm to anyone. We will say to the oppressors, "Taste the punishment of the Fire which you used to deny." (43) When Our clear verses are recited to them, they say, "He is but a man who wishes to prevent you from what your forefathers worshipped." And they say, "This is just a concocted lie." The disbelievers say about the truth when it comes to them, "This is only manifest magic." (44) We neither gave them any scriptures that they could study, nor did we send a warner to them before you. (45) Those before them denied. These people cannot even reach a tenth of what We gave them, yet they falsify My messengers. How (grievous) will My retribution be?

THE REBELLIOUSNESS AND OBSTINACY OF THE DISBELIEVERS, AND THEIR PUNISHMENT

Describing another scene of the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, Allāh says, *"The day when We shall gather them all, and Allāh will say to the angels, 'Are these the ones who used to worship you?'"* This question will be asked to expose the error of the polytheists who worshipped the angels.

The angels will say to Allāh, *"You are Pure! You are our Protecting Friend, not them. (We have no ties with them). The fact is that they used to worship the Jinn, most of them having faith in them."* These people made statues resembling the hideous

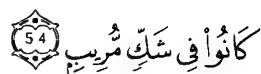
forms in which Satan *(Shaytān)* appeared before them. He also instructed them to perpetrate polytheism *(shirk)* and, because they obeyed him, they were actually worshipping him.

The polytheists held the belief that their gods will intercede on their behalf on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh dispels this notion by saying, *'Today, none shall be able to do good or harm to anyone. We will say to the oppressors, 'Taste the punishment of the Fire, which you used to deny.''* All their hopes will then be dashed forever.

"When Our clear verses are recited to them, they say, 'He (i.e. the one reciting the Qur'ān) *is but a man who wishes to prevent you from what your forefathers worshipped.' And they say, 'This* (Qur'ān) *is just a concocted lie.'"* The disbelievers say about the truth when it comes to them [via the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], 'This is only manifest magic.

Allāh says in this regard, *"We neither gave them any scriptures that they could study, nor did we send a warner to them before you.* Therefore, the Arab polytheists need to be grateful to Allāh for sending them the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān. A verse of Surah Fātir states that, before the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم advent, the polytheists of Makkah used to *"take solemn oaths by Allāh that if a warner has to come to them, they would become more rightly guided than any nation."* However, *"when the warner came to them, it only increased them in animosity."* Instead of accepting the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they rejected him and called him names.

"Those before them denied. These people cannot even reach a tenth of what We gave them (i.e. those before them), *yet they falsify My messengers. How will My retribution be?"* Even though the previous nations were extremely powerful, wealthy, living very long lives and residing in fortified mansions, Allāh still destroyed them because of their disobedience. Now, those after them should take heed to this and ponder about their own plight, since they do not even possess a tenth of the resources that those people had.

۞ قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَعِظُكُم بِوَٰحِدَةٍ ۖ أَن تَقُومُوا۟ لِلَّهِ مَثْنَىٰ وَفُرَٰدَىٰ ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُوا۟ ۚ مَا
بِصَاحِبِكُم مِّن جِنَّةٍ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ لَّكُم بَيْنَ يَدَىْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ﴿46﴾ قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُم
مِّنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿47﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّى يَقْذِفُ
بِٱلْحَقِّ عَلَّٰمُ ٱلْغُيُوبِ ﴿48﴾ قُلْ جَآءَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَمَا يُبْدِئُ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ وَمَا يُعِيدُ ﴿49﴾ قُلْ إِن ضَلَلْتُ
فَإِنَّمَآ أَضِلُّ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِى ۖ وَإِنِ ٱهْتَدَيْتُ فَبِمَا يُوحِىٓ إِلَىَّ رَبِّىٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ ﴿50﴾ وَلَوْ
تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ فَزِعُوا۟ فَلَا فَوْتَ وَأُخِذُوا۟ مِن مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ﴿51﴾ وَقَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ وَأَنَّىٰ لَهُمُ
ٱلتَّنَاوُشُ مِن مَّكَانٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿52﴾ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِهِۦ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَيَقْذِفُونَ بِٱلْغَيْبِ مِن
مَّكَانٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿53﴾ وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ كَمَا فُعِلَ بِأَشْيَاعِهِم مِّن قَبْلُ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ

(46) Say, "I give you only one advice. That you stand for Allāh in twos and individually, then you ponder. Your companion is not Insane. He is but a warner to you before the advent of a severe punishment." (47) Say, "You can keep whatever remuneration I may have asked of you. My recompense is Allāh's responsibility, and He is Witness over all things." (48) Say, "Verily my Lord will make the truth conquer. He has perfect knowledge of the unseen." (49) Say, "The truth has arrived and falsehood shall not show its face, nor make a return. (50) Say, "If I am astray, then I have strayed to my own detriment. But if I am rightly guided, then it is on account of what my Lord has revealed to me. Verily, He is the All Hearing, Close." (51) If only you could see when they will be terrified, will have no escape and will be seized from nearby. (52) They will say, "We believe it." How can they reach it from a distant place? (53) They have already disbelieved it before and they speculated about the un seen from a far-off place. (54) A barrier will fall between them and the desires they hoped for, just as it occurred to the groups before them, indeed, they were ever in a confused doubt.

ALLĀH INSTRUCTS THE POLYTHEISTS TO PONDER COLLECTIVELY OR INDIVIDUALLY

The polytheists claimed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was insane as an excuse for refusing to believe in him. Therefore, Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them, *"Say, 'I give you only one advice. That you stand for Allāh in twos and individually, then you ponder. Your companion is not insane. He is but a warner to you before the advent a severe punishment."*

Allāh invites them to leave all their inhibitions and prejudices aside for a while and to seriously ponder about the pure and upright lifestyle that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم led. He grew up before them and lived among them for forty years before claiming to be a Prophet. They knew his character and personality. They must therefore sit either in groups or individually and think the matter over very earnestly. They must listen to what he has said and ponder over the status of the Qur'ān, which challenged them to produce something equal to it. Taking all matters into consideration, they will realise that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is certainly Allāh's messenger and not at all insane.

Thereafter, Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to convey the following messages to the people:

- "You can keep whatever remuneration I may have asked of you. My recompense is Allāh 's responsibility (which He will fulfil), and He is Witness over all things (and will punish you for your disbelief and opposition)."
- "Verily my Lord will make the truth (and the supporters of truth) conquer. He has perfect knowledge of the un seen."
- *"The truth has arrived and falsehood shall not show its face, nor make a return."* When the Muslims conquered Makkah,

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited this verse and verse 81 of Surah Bani Isrā'īl (Surah 17), where Allāh says, *"Say, 'The truth has arrived and falsehood has vanished. Indeed, falsehood was bound to disappear.* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 686*]

📖 *"If I am astray, then I have strayed* (from the true religion of Islām) *to my own detriment."* This verse tells the polytheists that, by straying from Islām, they are astray. However, it does not tell them directly, but rather instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to use his own name to say this. In this way, the message reaches the target without offending the addressee.

📖 *"But if I am rightly guided, then it is on account of what my Lord has revealed to me."* Therefore, people will also be rightly guided by following the Qur'ān. Again, the same mode of address is used as above. *"Verily, He is the All Hearing, Close."* Therefore, Allāh knows every deed of man.

Allāh then describes the condition of the disbelievers on the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh says, *"If only you could see when they will be terrified, will have no escape, and will be seized from nearby. They will say, 'We believe it.' How can they reach it* (unto belief) *from a distant place* (the Hereafter)? (whereas) *They have already disbelieved it before* (in this world) *and they speculated about the unseen from a far-off place. A barrier will fall between them and the desires they hoped for, just as it occurred to the groups before them. Indeed, they were ever in a confused doubt."* All their hopes will be dashed when they witness the punishment of the Hereafter.

سورة فاطر

Makkan	Surah Fatir	Verses 45

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُو۟لِىٓ أَجْنِحَةٍ مَّثْنَىٰ وَثُلَٰثَ وَرُبَٰعَ
يَزِيدُ فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَآءُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (1) مَّا يَفْتَحِ ٱللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِن رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا
مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ (2) يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ
ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ خَٰلِقٍ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ لَآ إِلَٰهَ
إِلَّا هُوَ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ (3) وَإِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ
تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ (4) يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم
بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ (5) إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَٱتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا۟ حِزْبَهُۥ لِيَكُونُوا۟ مِنْ
أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ (6) ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُم
مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ (7)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) All praise be to Allāh, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels messengers, possessing two, three and four wings. Allāh increases in His creation as He pleases. Verily Allāh has power over all things. (2) There is none to withhold the mercy Allāh opens to His people, and there is none to release the mercy that He withholds. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (3) O people! Call to mind Allāh's favour upon you. Is there another creator besides Allāh who sustains you from the sky and the earth? There is no deity besides Him. So to where are you retrogressing? (4) If they falsify you, then many messengers were falsified before you. All affairs return to Allāh. (5) O people! Allāh's promise is certainly true, so never let the worldly life deceive you, nor should the great deceiver beguile you by taking Allāh's name. (6) Indeed Satan

(Shaytān) is your enemy, so treat him as an enemy. He calls to his party only so that they become inmates of the Blaze. (7) There shall be severe punishment for the disbelievers, and forgiveness and tremendous reward for those who believe and do good deeds.

ONLY ALLĀH CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

Another name for Surah Fātir (Creator) is Surah Malā'ikah (angels). Like Surah Fātiha (*Surah 1*), Surah Bani Isrā'īl (*Surah 17*) and Surah Kahf (*Surah 18*), this Surah commences with Allāh's praise. Allāh says, *"All praise be to Allāh, the Creator of the heavens and the earth..."*

Besides the heavens and the earth, Allāh also created the angels for specific tasks. Allāh says that He also made *"angels messengers"* because they were required to convey Allāh's messages to the Prophets عليهم السلام. Allāh created them in a unique fashion, with *"two, three and four wings."* Some have many more wings than this. In a hadith of Bukhari, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that he saw Jibr'īl عليه السلام with 600 wings.

"Allāh increases in His creation as He pleases. Verily Allāh has power over all things." Allāh creates the various forms and species of creation in varying numbers and with varying traits. All this is according to His perfect wisdom.

"There is none to withhold the mercy Allāh opens to His people, and there is none to release the mercy that He withholds. He is the Mighty, the Wise." When Allāh opens His bounty on some poor people, causing them to progress to great heights of prosperity, then others burn with envy. However, their envy cannot hinder Allāh's mercy and benevolence in the least. Allāh, in His might, will allow the prosperity to continue unabated.

Allāh then announces, *"O people! Call to mind Allāh 's favour upon you."* When people reflect on the wealth, knowledge and other good fortune which Allāh gives them, they will be inspired to express gratitude to Him. In this way, they will be able to concentrate their acts of devotion solely for Allāh.

Allāh then urges people to think, *"Is there another creator besides Allāh who sustains you from the sky and the earth?"* As a result of their own reflection, people will come to realise that only Allāh can send the rains, which cause the fields and plantations to flourish for man's benefit. Man will then arrive at the conclusion that *"There is no deity besides Him."* Therefore, Allāh asks, *"So to where are you retrogressing?"*

Allāh then consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"If they falsify you, then many messengers were falsified before you."* Therefore, do not be grieved by their behaviour, but continue with your mission. *"All affairs return to Allāh."* Allāh will take them to task for their deeds on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah).*

Allāh then addresses those who reject oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and belief in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He says, *"O people! Allāh 's promise {of Judgment day (Qiyāmah)} is certainly true, so never let the worldly life deceive you..."* i.e. do not be enamoured by the charms of this world, thereby causing you to become negligent of the Hereafter. Besides the deception of the world, Allāh warns people not to allow *"the great deceiver* {i.e. Satan *(Shaytān)* to} *beguile you by taking*

Allāh's name. Indeed Satan (Shaytān) is your enemy, so treat him as an enemy. He calls to his party only so that they become inmates of the Blaze."

Satan *(Shaytān)* fools man into thinking that he should continue committing sins because he can always seek forgiveness from Allāh at a later stage. However, man fails to realise that he does not have any guarantee about his life and can lose it at any moment, which may well be before he can secure forgiveness. Man should therefore be cautious about Satan's *(Shaytān's)* ploys.

Allāh then describes the outcome of man's existence when He says, *"There shall be severe punishment for the disbelievers, and forgiveness and tremendous reward for those who believe and do good deeds."*

أَفَمَن زُيِّنَ لَهُۥ سُوٓءُ عَمَلِهِۦ فَرَءَاهُ حَسَنًا فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ فَلَا
تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسَرَٰتٍ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ
فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَسُقْنَٰهُ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَحْيَيْنَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا كَذَٰلِكَ ٱلنُّشُورُ ﴿٩﴾

(8) The person whose evil deeds have been beautified for him, causing him to regard them as good (Can he be like the one who does good?). Verily Allāh sends astray whoever He wills and guide whoever He wills. So let not your soul leave in remorse over them. Indeed Allāh has knowledge of what they do. (9) Allāh is the One Who sends the winds which carry a cloud. We then waft it to a dead land, and with it We revive the earth after its death. Thus shall be the resurrection.

THOSE WHO CONSIDER THEIR EVIL DEEDS TO BE GOOD CAN NEVER EQUAL THOSE WHO DO GOOD DEEDS

Allāh speaks about those people whom Satan *(Shaytān)* has fooled into thinking that their evil deeds are good, hence evil deeds begin to appeal to them and they abhor good deeds. Allāh says, *"The person whose evil deeds have been beautified for him, causing him to regard them as good."* The verse contains a hidden phrase, which reads; *"Can this person be like the one who does good deeds and who regards good as good and evil as evil?"*

"Verily Allāh sends astray whoever He wills and guides whoever He wills. So let not your soul leave in remorse over them. Indeed Allāh has knowledge of what they do." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was greatly grieved when people did not accept Islām because he desired that every person should be saved from Hell. Allāh consoles him in this verse by telling him not to grieve over them because guidance is only from Allāh.

This is also mentioned in Surah Shuarā, where Allāh says, *"It seems like you will destroy yourself because they are not believing."* [*Surah 26, verse 3*]

Thereafter, Allāh describes His ability to provide and the possibility of Qiyāmah (*doomsday*). He says, *"Allāh is the One Who sends the winds which carry a cloud. We then waft it to a dead* (arid and waterless) *land, and with it We revive the*

earth after its death." After the rains, plants and vegetation flourish, providing food for man and animals.

Just as Allāh raises plants from the earth, He is also Capable of raising the dead from the ground. Therefore, He says, *"Thus shall be the resurrection."*

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ ٱلْكَلِمُ ٱلطَّيِّبُ وَٱلْعَمَلُ ٱلصَّٰلِحُ
يَرْفَعُهُۥ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَمْكُرُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۖ وَمَكْرُ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُوَ يَبُورُ ﴿١٠﴾
وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا ۚ وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ أُنثَىٰ وَلَا
تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ مِن مُّعَمَّرٍ وَلَا يُنقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِۦٓ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ
عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

(10) Whoever desires honour, then know that all honour belongs to Allāh. The Pure Word climbs unto Him, propelled by good deeds. There shall be a severe punishment for those who devise evil schemes. The plots of these people will certainly be destroyed. (11) Allāh has created you from sand, then from a seed, and then made you in pairs. He has knowledge of every female that conceives and delivers. Recorded in the Book is every aged person who ages and whose age is depleted. This is simple for Allāh.

ALL HONOUR BELONGS TO ALLĀH WHO HAS KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYTHING

To attain honour and to be protected from adversities, people turn to their various gods and perform various deeds, which actually invite Allāh's wrath. Allāh says, *"Whoever desires honour, then know* (i.e. he should bear in mind) *that all honour belongs to Allāh."* Only Allāh can give honour to a person, and He takes it away from people as well.

Certain commentators have interpreted *"honour"* to mean *"victory,"* which comes only from Allāh. On one military expedition, the hypocrites said, *"if we return to Madinah, the honourable ones among us shall certainly exile the humiliated ones."* They meant to expel the Muhājirīn (*emigrants*) from Madinah. In response to this statement, Allāh revealed the following verse of Surah Munafiqūn: *"All honour belongs to Allāh, His messenger and the believers but the hypocrites do not know it."* [*Surah 63, verse 8*]

Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Give to the hypocrites the glad tidings of an agonising punishment; those who take the disbelievers as friends instead of the believers. Do they seek honour from them? Indeed all honour is forAllāh only."* [*Surah 4, verse 138, 139*]

These verses warn those people who wish to please the disbelievers by adopting their mode of dress and behaviour in an effort to gain honour from them. By doing so, they wish to be regarded as 'honourable' people. Such people should bear in mind that honour can be had only from Allāh, when they will

please him. No honour can be had in Allāh's displeasure. The 'honour' that these people think they are receiving is actually a false honour, which is extremely short-lived.

"The Pure Word climbs unto Him..." i.e. Allāh accepts it. The *"Pure Word"* refers to the Kalimah of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, i.e. *"Lā ilāha IllAllāh* . Of course, it may also refer to all other forms of remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*.

Allāh adds that the *"Pure Word"* is *'propelled by good deeds."* This refers to all good deeds. However, the greatest of good deeds, without which no deed is accepted, is belief *(Imān)*.

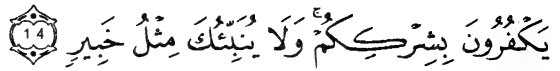
Allāh then cautions those who harass the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and plot against him. He says, *"There shall be a severe punishment for those who devise evil schemes. The plots of these people will certainly be destroyed."*

The plots that the polytheists devised against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم are mentioned in Surah A'rāf, where Allāh says, *"When the disbelievers schemed against you to imprison you, kill you or exile you. They plan and Allāh plans, and Allāh is the best of planners."* [*Surah 7, verse 30*]

Consequently, those who schemed against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were killed in the battle of Badr without ever realising their objectives. In this very Surah Allāh has declared the universal rule: *"The consequences of evil schemes encompass only those who devise them."* [*Surah Fātir (35), verse 43*]

Allāh then describes His creative powers when He says, *"Allāh has created you from sand, then from a seed (sperm), and then made you in pairs (male and female)."* Allāh created Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام from sand, and states that mankind were also created from sand because he was their father, from whom every human was born. It was after Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام that people were produced from the sperm when it fuses with the female egg.

"He has knowledge of every female that conceives and delivers.. Recorded in the Book, is every aged person who ages and whose age is depleted. This is simple for Allāh." The "Lawhul Mahfūz" contains the ages of all people, be their ages lengthy or shorter in comparison. It is extremely simple for Allāh to keep track of everything. Allāh decreed these matters even before man was created.

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْبَحْرَانِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ سَائِغٌ شَرَابُهُ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ ۖ وَمِن كُلٍّ
تَأْكُلُونَ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُونَ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا ۖ وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ فِيهِ مَوَاخِرَ
لِتَبْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ
فِي اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ
رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِن قِطْمِيرٍ
﴿١٣﴾ إِن تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دُعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا مَا اسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ ۖ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

(12) The two seas are not the same. The one is sweet, quenching and easy to drink, while the other is salty and bitter. From each of these you eat fresh meat and you extract jewels that you wear. You will see ships cleaving (through the waters) so that you seek from Allāh's bounty and show gratitude. (13) Allāh enters the day into the night and the night into the day and has subjugated the sun and the moon. Each one travels to an appointed term. This is Allāh, your Lord! To Him belongs all sovereignty. Those whom you worship besides Allāh do not have control of even the skin on the date seed. (14) If you call them, they will not hear your call. Even if they hear, they will be unable to respond. On the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) they will reject your polytheism. None can inform you like the Informed.

THE BENEFITS OF THE SEA AND THE DECLARATION THAT THE GODS OF THE POLYTHEISTS DO NOT HAVE POWER OVER ANYTHING

Some water sources contain water that is palatable and slaking for one's thirst. On the other hand, the waters of the ocean are extremely salty, bitter and difficult to drink. These are all the creation of Allāh. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"The two seas are not the same. The one is sweet, quenching and easy to drink, while the other is salty and bitter."* Allāh then describes one of the many benefits of these water bodies, when he says, *"From each of these you eat fresh meat (fish, as well as birds)..."*

The second benefit is described in the words, *"and you extract jewels that you wear."* Pearls, shells and other gems are found in water, which people use to make jewellery.

The third benefit is mentioned as, *"You will see ships cleaving (through the waters) so that you seek from Allāh's bounty and show gratitude."* Ships are invaluable to transport large masses of merchandise from continent to continent. They are therefore used to acquire Allāh's bounties of produce and various commodities. Man has to be grateful to Allāh for all of this.

"Allāh enters the day into the night and the night into the day and has subjugated the sun and the moon. Each one travels to an appointed term." Allāh causes the night to extend longer than the day in winter and vice versa in Summer. He has also prescribed set tasks for the sun and the moon, which they duly fulfil until the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

"This is Allāh, your Lord! To Him belongs all sovereignty. Those whom you worship besides Allāh do not have control of even the skin on the date seed." In fact, they are so helpless that *"If you call them, they will not hear your call. Even if* (it be assumed that) *they hear, they will be unable to respond."*

If this is their state of helplessness in this world, the polytheists cannot expect any assistance from them on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. In fact, *"On the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) they will reject your polytheism."* The gods of these Polytheists will absolve themselves of their worshippers on the Day of Judgment

(Qiyāmah).

Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"When the idolaters will see their partners, they will exclaim, 'O our Lord! These are our partners that we used to worship instead of You.' Then the word will be flung back to them that 'You are definitely liars!"* [*Surah 16. verse 86*]

"None can inform you like the Informed." When Allāh, The Informed, informs one of something, one will have no option but to accept it as the truth because He has knowledge of everything.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ أَنتُمُ ٱلْفُقَرَآءُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾ إِن يَشَأْ
يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾ وَمَا ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ
وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۚ وَإِن تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ حِمْلِهَا لَا يُحْمَلْ مِنْهُ شَىْءٌ وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰٓ ۗ إِنَّمَا
تُنذِرُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ وَمَن تَزَكَّىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّىٰ
لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ وَٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١٩﴾ وَلَا ٱلظُّلُمَـٰتُ
وَلَا ٱلنُّورُ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَلَا ٱلظِّلُّ وَلَا ٱلْحَرُورُ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمَا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْأَحْيَآءُ وَلَا ٱلْأَمْوَٰتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُسْمِعُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ مَّن فِى ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِنْ أَنتَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِنَّآ
أَرْسَلْنَـٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۚ وَإِن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَإِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ
كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ وَبِٱلزُّبُرِ وَبِٱلْكِتَـٰبِ ٱلْمُنِيرِ ﴿٢٥﴾
ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۖ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٢٦﴾

(15) O people! You are all beggars before Allāh and Allāh is Independent, Most Worthy of praise. (16) If He wills, He could remove you and replace you with a new creation. (17) This is not at all difficult for Allāh. (18) None shall be burdened with the load of another. If any burdened person has to call for his load to be carried, none of it will be carried, even though it be his close relative (that he calls). You warn only those who fear their Lord without seeing Him, and who establish Salāh. Whoever purifies himself, purifies himself only for his own good. To Allāh will the return be. (19) The blind and the seeing cannot be the same... (20) ...Nor can a multiplicity of darkness and the light (be the same). (21) .... Nor shade and heat. (22) The living and the dead cannot be the same. Whoever Allāh wills He makes him hear, and you cannot make those in the graves hear. (23) You are only a warner. (24) Verily We have sent you with the truth as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. A warner passed in every nation. (25) If they falsify you, then those before them also falsified. Their messengers brought to them clear miracles, scriptures and an illuminating Book. (26) Thereafter I seized those who disbelieved. So how was My punishment?

EVERYONE IS DEPENDENT ON ALLĀH, NONE SHALL BEAR THE BURDEN OF ANOTHER, AND A WARNER CAME TO EVERY NATION

The above verses contain discussions on several subjects. The first of these is contained in the verse, where Allāh says, *"O people! You are all beggars before Allāh and Allāh is Independent, Most Worthy of praise."* A believer *(Mu'min)* realises that Allāh needs nothing from Him, but He requires Allāh for everything. Even his worship is for his own benefit because Allāh does not require it. Even without man's worship, Allāh remains *'independent, Most Worthy of praise."*

The second aspect discussed is that Allāh reserves the right to do as He pleases with man. Allāh says, *"If He wills, He could remove you and replace you with a new creation. This is not at all difficult for Allāh."*

The third factor discussed in these verses is that *"None shall be burdened with the load* (sins) *of another {on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah)}. If any burdened person has to call* (to another) *for his load to be carried, none of it will be carried, even though it be his close relative* (that he calls)."

Allāh says in Surah Abas, *"The day when man will flee from his brother, his mother, his father, his spouse and his children. On that day every person will be engrossed in an affair that will make him oblivious of others."* [*Surah 80, verses 34-37*]

Discussing the fourth aspect, Allāh says to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that although he is a messenger to everyone, his preaching has an impact only on *"those who fear their Lord without seeing Him, and who establish Salāh."* Salāh is specially mentioned in this verse because of its special nature, which is derived from fear for Allāh.

The fifth point discussed is *"Whoever purifies himself (by abstaining from evil and sin), purifies himself only for his own good (because he will be amply rewarded for this). To Allāh will the return be (when each person will be duly rewarded or punished)."*

"The blind (the disbelievers) *and the seeing* {the believers *(Mu'minīn)*} *cannot be the same, nor can a multiplicity of darkness* (false hood) *and the* light (the truth) (be the same), *nor shade and heat."* While some commentators have interpreted *"shade"* as rewards and *"heat"* as punishment, others have mentioned that *"shade"* refers to Heaven and *"heat"* refers to Hell.

In the same strain, Allāh adds, *"The living* {believers *(Mu'minīn)*/people of Heaven} *and the dead* (disbelievers/people of Hell) *cannot be the same. Whoever Allāh wills He makes him hear..."* Allāh grants guidance to whomsoever He wills, thereby causing them to accept Islām.

Allāh then tells the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, *"and you cannot make those in the graves hear. You are only a warner."* Just as the dead cannot hear what people say, those who have decided to adamantly remain as disbelievers cannot be influenced. The subject of the dead hearing has been discussed at length in the commentary of verse 80 of Surah Naml (*Surah 27*). The reality of the matter is that the dead cannot hear, but Allāh may allow them to hear if He wills.

"Verily We have sent you with the truth as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. A warner passed in every nation." Allāh mentions a general rule in this verse,

making it the seventh subject discussed so far. Allāh sent a warner to every nation so that they may realise their responsibilities and refrain from polytheism *(shirk)*.

Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"We shall never punish (any nation) until We send a messenger."* [Surah 17, verse 15]

A verse of Surah Qasas reads: *"Your Lord would never destroy towns until He sends a messenger to their capital, reciting His verses to them. We would never destroy towns unless their inhabitants were oppressive."* [Surah 28, verse 59]

The apostleship of many Prophets عليهم السلام have been certified by the Qur'ān like Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. It will therefore be necessary for every believer *(Mu'min)* to believe in the fact that they were Allāh's true Holy Prophets. Other religions claim to follow certain other people, whom the Qur'ān and Ahadīth have not certified as the Holy Prophets. Muslims cannot attest to the Prophethood of these people, even though their followers trace historical evidence to substantiate their claim. They may be regarded as the Prophets only when Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم attest to this. It will not be appropriate to deduce. Their Prophethood from the verse *"A warner passed in every nation"* because the word *"warner"* is not necessarily a Prophet.

In fact, certain portraits and statues of these religious leaders portray them to be naked or semi-naked, which dispels the notion that they could ever have been Allāh's Prophets.

Allāh then tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"If they falsify you, then (this is not surprising because) those before them also falsified* (their Prophets). *Their messengers brought to them clear miracles, scriptures and an illuminating Book."* The various Prophets عليهم السلام brought Allāh's scriptures like the Torah and Injīl to their nations, but most of them still refused to accept.

"Thereafter I seized those who disbelieved. So how was My punishment?" This verse urges others to reflect over the outcome of the previous nations so that they do not fall into the same trap.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ ثَمَرَٰتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهَا ۚ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ
جُدَدٌۢ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿27﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ كَذَٰلِكَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا ۗ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿28﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَٰبَ ٱللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَٰرَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿29﴾
لِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿30﴾
وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِۦ

لَخَبِيرٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣١﴾ ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ
لِّنَفْسِهِۦ وَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌۢ بِٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَضْلُ
ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٢﴾ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا ۖ
وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا ٱلْحَزَنَ ۖ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا
لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ ٱلْمُقَامَةِ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا
يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

(27) Do they not see that Allāh sends rain from the sky, thereby extracting various fruits of varying colours? From the mountains, there are different ridges, varying from white to red of different shades and some which are extremely black. (28) There is a similar variation of colours among people, creatures and animals. From Allāh 's bondsmen, only the learned ones fear Him. Verily Allāh is Mighty, Most Forgiving. (29) Indeed, those who recite Allāh 's Book, establish Salāh and spend secretly and openly from what We have given them, they are hopeful of a trade that will never be destroyed. (30) So that Allāh may grant them their reward in full and increase them from His grace. Verily He is Most Forgiving, Most Appreciative. (31) That of the Book which We have revealed to you is the truth, verifying the scriptures before it. Without doubt, Allāh is Informed and Ever Watchful over His bondsmen. (32) Thereafter, We made those of Our bondsmen whom We chose inheritors of the Book. Of them were those who oppressed their souls, while there were those who were moderate. There were also those who were leaders in good deeds by the command of their Lord. This is Allāh's extreme grace. (33) In the eternal gardens that they will enter, they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls. Their garments there will be of silk. (34) They will say, "All praise be to Allāh, Who has removed grief from us. Undoubtedly our Lord is Most Forgiving, Appreciative." (35) "Our Lord has settled us in an eternal home by His grace. Here no difficulty will ever afflict us, nor shall any tiredness touch us."

THE VIRTUES OF THE RAIN AND THE QUALITIES OF ALLĀH'S PIOUS BONDSMEN

"Do they not see that Allāh sends rain from the sky, thereby extracting various fruits of varying colours?" Just as the colours of the fruits vary, their tastes and textures also vary from fruit to fruit.

"From the mountains, there are different ridges, varying from white to red of different shades and some which are extremely black." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه says that "ridges" refer to the roads and passes between mountains, which people use to travel for their needs.

"There is a similar variation of colours among people, creatures and animals." All of these display Allāh's amazing creative powers and His favour upon man by showering him with these various bounties.

"From Allāh's bondsmen, only the learned ones fear Him. Verily Allāh is Mighty, Most Forgiving." A person who possesses any knowledge which makes him recognise Allāh will be regarded as *"learned,"* even if this knowledge is of biology, astronomy or religion. Allāh can be recognised with the appropriate knowledge, thereby leading one to fear Him and abstain from sins.

However, such knowledge will not profit one if one follows one's whims and desires. Allāh says, *"Have you seen the one who has taken his whims as a deity?"*

Possessing the most knowledge, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم feared Allāh the most. He mentioned in a hadith, "I am the one who fears Allāh most and the most abstinent." [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 707, Muslim v. 1 p. 449*]

Allāh then lauds His pious servants when He says, *"Indeed, those who recite Allāh's Book, establish Salāh and spend secretly and openly from what We have given them, they are hopeful of a trade that will never be destroyed. So that Allāh may grant them their reward in full and increase them from His grace. Verily He is Most Forgiving, Most Appreciative."* These people will be rewarded with a minimum of ten rewards for every deed in appreciation of the deed. In addition to this, Allāh will forgive all their shortcomings. Such a trade can never result in a loss.

Allāh then describes the Qur'ān saying, *"That of the Book* (Qur'ān), *which We have revealed to you is the truth, verifying the scriptures before it. Without doubt, Allāh is Informed and Ever Watchful over His bondsmen."*

"Thereafter, We made those of Our bondsmen whom We chose inheritors of the Book." This verse makes it clear that those who receive Allāh' s scripture are chosen people. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the person who has been given Allāh's Book, and thereafter he considers another person superior to himself, such a person has certainly degraded the best bounty. [*"Jāmi'us Saghīr" v. 6 p. 75*]

Thereafter, Allāh describes the three categories of those given the Book. Allāh says, *"Of them were those who (1) oppressed their souls (i.e. the sinners), while there were (2) those who were moderate. There were also (3) those who were leaders in good deeds by the command of their Lord. This is Allāh's extreme grace."* This verse teaches us to show reverence even to the sinful ones among those given Allāh's Book.

In a hadith of Tirmidhi, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that these three groups of people are equal (in terms of the favour bestowed on them), and will all be in Heaven.

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once recited this verse from the pulpit and then narrated the following saying of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم: "Those of us who are *"leaders in good deeds"* shall be leaders (in attaining rewards and high ranks), the *"moderate"* ones will attain salvation, while those *"who oppressed their souls"* will be forgiven."

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once recited the verse, after which he said, "The *"leaders in good deeds"* shall enter Heaven without reckoning, the *"moderate"* ones will have a light reckoning, while those *"who oppressed their souls"* will be halted at the place of reckoning until they

are overcome with grief. Thereafter, they will also be admitted into Heaven." the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited the verse, *"They will say, 'All praise be to Allāh, Who has removed grief from us. Undoubtedly our Lord is Most Forgiving, Appreciative."* [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 57 1*]

More details regarding the three groups of people have been discussed in *"Ruhul Ma'āni'* and *"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*.

Allāh then describes the condition of those destined for Heaven saying, *"In the eternal gardens that they will enter, they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls. Their garments there will be of silk."* The same description is given in Surah Hajj, where Allāh says, *"Allāh will surely admit those who believe and do good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. There they will be adorned with bangles of gold and pearls and their clothes shall be of silk."* [*Surah 22, verse 23*]

The temperament of the people in Heaven will be different from that of people in this world. It will not be possible to base one's perception of the things in Heaven upon one's perception of this world. Therefore, it will be incorrect to say that bangles are unbecoming of men in Heaven because they are unbecoming in this world. While men will be permitted to wear jewellery in Heaven (which is not permissible in this world), it will suit them in Heaven. It was popular with the kings and monarchs of the past to wear jewellery, which people then considered to be good-looking although no one wears it today.

Many Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم have reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The man who wears silk in this world will not wear it in the Hereafter." [*"Mishkāt" p. 373*]

Allāh then quotes the words of appreciation that the people of Heaven will express on the Day of Judgment (*Qiyāmah*). Allāh says, *"They will say, 'All praise be to Allāh Who has removed grief from us. Undoubtedly our Lord is Most Forgiving, Appreciative. Our Lord has settled us in an eternal home by His grace."*

In saying the above, the people of Heaven allude to the fact that this world is not really a place to live in, but the true home is Heaven because it is a place which people *"will not want to leave."*

Describing Heaven, they will say, *"Here, no difficulty will ever afflict us, nor shall any tiredness touch us."* They will enjoy only peace, comfort and rest in Heaven. Allāh says in Surah Hijr, *"No difficulty will afflict them there, nor shall they be removed from there."* [*Surah 15, verse 48*]

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُم مِّنْ
عَذَابِهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي كُلَّ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِخُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ
صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ۚ أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ
النَّذِيرُ ۖ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

(36) The Fire of Hell will be for those who disbelieve, where no decree will be

passed against them so that they may die. Their punishment will also not be lightened. Thus do We punish every disbeliever. (37) They will be screaming in Hell saying, "O our Lord! Remove us from here and we will do deeds unlike those we used to perpetrate." "Did We not grant you sufficient age in which the one who takes heed may take heed? And did a warner not come to you? So taste (of the punishment)! The oppressors will not have a helper."

THE PEOPLE OF HELL WILL NOT DIE, THEIR PUNISHMENT WILL NOT BE LIGHTENED AND THEY WILL NEVER EMERGE FROM HELL

After mentioning the bounties of the people of Heaven, Allāh continues to speak of the plight of those destined for Hell. Allāh says, *"The Fire of Hell will be for those who disbelieve, where no decree will be passed against them so that they may die. Their punishment will also not be lightened. Thus do We punish every disbeliever."*

Further describing their miserable plight, Allāh adds, *"They will be screaming in Hell saying, 'O our Lord! Remove us from here and we will do deeds unlike those we used to perpetrate.'"* They will promise to follow Allāh's commands in the world. Allāh will reply, *"Did We not grant you sufficient age in which the one who takes heed may take heed? And did a warner not come to you? (If you had taken heed and followed the guidance of the Prophets* عليهم السلام*, you would not be pleading for mercy today. However, since you refused to believe) So taste (of the punishment)! The oppressors will not have a helper."*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh will not accept any excuse (for sin) from the person whom Allāh had granted respite until he reached the age of sixty. The sins of such an old person will be inexcusable because he had lived long enough to know what he should do and what he should avoid.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that an announcer will ask on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, "Where are those who reached the age of sixty?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then added, "This is the age regarding which Allāh says, *"Did We not grant you sufficient age in which the one who takes heed may take heed? And did a warner not come to you?"* [*"Mishkāt" p. 451*]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَٰلِمُ غَيۡبِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمُۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ (38) هُوَ
ٱلَّذِي جَعَلَكُمۡ خَلَٰٓئِفَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ فَمَن كَفَرَ فَعَلَيۡهِ كُفۡرُهُۥۖ وَلَا يَزِيدُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ كُفۡرُهُمۡ
عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡ إِلَّا مَقۡتٗاۖ وَلَا يَزِيدُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ كُفۡرُهُمۡ إِلَّا خَسَارٗا (39) قُلۡ أَرَءَيۡتُمۡ شُرَكَآءَكُمُ
ٱلَّذِينَ تَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُواْ مِنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَمۡ لَهُمۡ شِرۡكٞ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ أَمۡ
ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُمۡ كِتَٰبٗا فَهُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَتٖ مِّنۡهُۚ بَلۡ إِن يَعِدُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ بَعۡضُهُم بَعۡضًا إِلَّا غُرُورًا
(40) ۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُمۡسِكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ أَن تَزُولَاۚ وَلَئِن زَالَتَآ إِنۡ أَمۡسَكَهُمَا مِنۡ

(38) Verily Allāh has knowledge of the unseen things of the heavens and the earth. He certainly has knowledge of the secrets of the heart. (39) It is He Who made you successors on earth. Whoever disbelieves, then his disbelief is to his own detriment. The disbelief of the disbelievers will only increase the wrath of their Lord for them. The disbelief of the disbelievers will only increase them in loss. (40) Say, "Tell me about your partners whom you worship besides Allāh. Show me what they have created of the earth, or do they share a partnership in the heavens and the earth? Or have We given them a Book from which they have a clear proof? The oppressors only make deceptive promises to each other." (41) Verily Allāh withholds the heavens and the earth from moving. If they were ever to move, there will be none to withhold them after Him. Indeed He is Tolerant, Most Forgiving.

THE DETRIMENT OF DISBELIEF WILL AFFECT THE DISBELIEVERS WHO MERELY DECEIVE EACH OTHER

Allāh describes His tremendous knowledge, when He says, *"Verily Allāh has knowledge of the un seen things of the heavens and the earth. He certainly has knowledge of the secrets of the heart."* Nothing is hidden from Him.

"It Is He Who made you successors on earth." Allāh has made it such that every generation succeeds the next on earth. Because of all the bounties that Allāh has bestowed on man, man is obliged to express gratitude to Allāh by believing in Him and following His Prophets عليهم السلام. If they do not then *"Whoever disbelieves* (thereby expressing ingratitude to Allāh), *then his disbelief* (and ingratitude) *is to his own detriment. The disbelief of the disbelievers will only increase the wrath of their Lord for them."* Allāh's wrath is constantly increasing as the disbelievers continues to disbelieve. Although the disbelievers think that they are prospering, they are actually retrogressing all the time because *"The disbelief of the disbelievers will only increase them in loss."*

"Say (to the Polytheists), 'Tell me about your partners whom you worship besides Allāh. Show me what they have created of the earth (because of which you consider them worthy of worship), or do they share a partnership in the heavens and the earth?" Their false gods are on Allāh's earth and beneath Allāh's sky. They have nothing to their credit for which they may be deemed worthy of worship.

'Or have We given them (the polytheists) *a Book from which they have a clear proof?"* The answer is an obvious "No!". The polytheists have nothing to substantiate their claims and beliefs. They *"only make deceptive promises to each other."* To maintain their strength, the disbelievers and polytheists merely tell each other things to deceive themselves into adhering to disbelief and shirk. They tell each other lies about the virtues of polytheism *(shirk)* and promise each other that their gods will intercede for them on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah).*

Describing His immense power, Allāh says, *"Verily Allāh withholds the heavens and the earth from moving. If they were ever to move, there will be none to withhold them after Him. Indeed He is Tolerant, Most Forgiving."* Allāh has created

these bodies and none can control them in any way. The gods of the polytheists can therefore not be regarded as deities.

Allāh keeps the heavens and the earth in their fixed locations, from which they cannot shift. Of course, as He has prescribed, they may still rotate on their own axis and orbit the sun which is constantly travelling through the galaxy. This is as Allāh has decreed.

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ لَئِن جَآءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ لَّيَكُونُنَّ أَهْدَىٰ مِنْ إِحْدَى ٱلْأُمَمِ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ مَّا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا نُفُورًا ﴿42﴾ ٱسْتِكْبَارًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَكْرَ ٱلسَّيِّئِ وَلَا يَحِيقُ ٱلْمَكْرُ ٱلسَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِۦ فَهَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا سُنَّتَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ فَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ ٱللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ ٱللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا ﴿43﴾

(42) They take solemn oaths by Allāh that if a warner has to come to them, they would become more rightly guided than any nation. But when the warner came to them, it only increased them in animosity. (43) (This animosity) was because they were proud on earth and they devised evil schemes. The consequences of evil schemes encompass only those who devise them. They only seem to await the treatment of the previous generations. You will never find any change in Allāh 's practice, neither will you find any adjustment in Allāh 's practice.

THE QURAYSH OF MAKKAH SWORE THAT THEY WOULD FOLLOW THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم, BUT FAILED TO KEEP THIS PROMISE BECAUSE OF THEIR PRIDE

The Quraysh of Makkah often travelled to Shām (*Syria*), where they encountered the Jews and Christians. When they learnt that these people had denied their Prophets عليهم السلام, they *took "solemn oaths by Allāh that if a warner (a Prophet) has to come to them, they would become more rightly guided than any nation. But when the warner came to them, it only increased them in animosity. (This animosity) was because they were proud on earth and devised evil schemes."* They thought it below their dignity to accept Islām and targeted various plots against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

However, all their schemes backfired on them, and many of those who plotted the atrocities against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were killed in the battle of Badr. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"The consequences of evil schemes encompass only those who devise them."* An Arabic adage read: "The one who digs a hole for his brother will himself fall into it."

"They only seem to await the treatment of the previous generations. You will never find any change in Allāh's practice, neither will you find any adjustment in Allāh's practice." Allāh will punish these disbelievers just as He punished those before them. It is also Allāh's practice that He will never punish anyone for something he did not do. The disbelievers do not cease in their disbelief, almost as if they

are awaiting Allāh's punishment.

أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَكَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعْجِزَهُ مِن شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا (44) وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوا مَا تَرَكَ عَلَىٰ ظَهْرِهَا مِن دَابَّةٍ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۖ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ بَصِيرًا (45)

(44) Have they not travelled in the lands and seen what was the result of those before them, who were more powerful than them? Allāh is not such that anything in the heavens and the earth can defeat him. He is the All Knowing, Powerful. (45) If Allāh were to take man to task for everything he does, Allāh would not have left a single creature on the face of the earth. But Allāh defers them until an appointed term. When their term arrives, then Allāh is Ever Watchful over His bondsmen.

PEOPLE DO NOT HEED THE SIGNS DESPITE TRAVELLING AND IF ALLĀH HAD TO TAKE PEOPLE TO TASK FOR EVERY DEED, NO CREATURE WOULD HAVE BEEN LEFT ALIVE

The Quraysh of Makkah frequently passed by the ruins of the Thamud and the ruins of Sadūm [the town of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام] on their journeys to Shām (*Syria*). Although they were to take a lesson from these shattered towns, they never paid heed and still continued with their evil practices. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"Have they not travelled in the lands and seen what was the result of those before them, who were more powerful than them?"* The fact that these people were much more powerful than them should increase their awe and fear for Allāh.

"Allāh is not such that anything in the heavens and the earth can defeat him. He is the All Knowing, Powerful." When Allāh decides to punish any person or community, there is nothing to stop Him. None can ever think that Allāh is unaware of their sins, or that He is incapable of taking them to task.

Allāh concludes the verse by telling people that they should never seek to hurry Allāh's punishment. Allāh says, *"If Allāh were to take man to task for everything he does, Allāh would not have left a single creature on the face of the earth. But Allāh defers them until an appointed term. When their term arrives, then Allāh is Ever Watchful over His bondsmen."* People are foolish to think that because Allāh does not punish them for their sins, He is unaware of them. Allāh is Aware of everything, but, because of His mercy, He overlooks people's sins.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that although Allāh's punishment destroys everything and everyone in this world, Allāh will separate the believers *(Mu'minīn)* from the disbelievers on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. [*Bukhari p. 1053*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم once told them about an army that will march with the intent of destroying the Ka'ba. However, when they reach a certain plain, the ground will swallow the entire army, from the first to the last. Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها asked the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, "If the entire army, from the first to the last is to be swallowed, what about those who joined only for purposes of trade and those who were not with them?" The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "All will be destroyed, but they will all be resurrected according to their intentions." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 2 84*]

Although the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will be rewarded for their belief *(Imān)* and good deeds, they will receive additional rewards for the suffering they endure when Allāh's punishment strikes.

سورة يس

Makkan	Surah Ya-Sin	Verses 83

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

يسٓ ﴿١﴾ وَٱلۡقُرۡءَانِ ٱلۡحَكِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلۡمُرۡسَلِينَ ﴿٣﴾ عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ﴿٤﴾
تَنزِيلَ ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٥﴾ لِتُنذِرَ قَوۡمٗا مَّآ أُنذِرَ ءَابَآؤُهُمۡ فَهُمۡ غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿٦﴾ لَقَدۡ حَقَّ
ٱلۡقَوۡلُ عَلَىٰٓ أَكۡثَرِهِمۡ فَهُمۡ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿٧﴾ إِنَّا جَعَلۡنَا فِيٓ أَعۡنَٰقِهِمۡ أَغۡلَٰلٗا فَهِيَ إِلَى
ٱلۡأَذۡقَانِ فَهُم مُّقۡمَحُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَجَعَلۡنَا مِنۢ بَيۡنِ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ سَدّٗا وَمِنۡ خَلۡفِهِمۡ سَدّٗا
فَأَغۡشَيۡنَٰهُمۡ فَهُمۡ لَا يُبۡصِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَسَوَآءٌ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَأَنذَرۡتَهُمۡ أَمۡ لَمۡ تُنذِرۡهُمۡ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ
﴿١٠﴾ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ ٱلذِّكۡرَ وَخَشِيَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنَ بِٱلۡغَيۡبِۖ فَبَشِّرۡهُ بِمَغۡفِرَةٖ وَأَجۡرٖ
كَرِيمٍ ﴿١١﴾ إِنَّا نَحۡنُ نُحۡيِ ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰ وَنَكۡتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُواْ وَءَاثَٰرَهُمۡۚ وَكُلَّ شَيۡءٍ
أَحۡصَيۡنَٰهُ فِيٓ إِمَامٖ مُّبِينٖ ﴿١٢﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Yā Sīn. (2) By the oath of the wise Qur'ān. (3) You are verily among the messengers. (4) On the straight path. (5) A revelation of the Mighty, the Most Merciful (6) To warn a nation whose forefathers were not warned and who were negligent. (7) The decree has been passed against most of them, so they will not believe. (8) We shall place a yoke around their necks, which reaches to their chins, so their gazes are fixed upwards. (9) We have placed a barrier in front of them and a barrier behind them, and We have enveloped them so they cannot see. (10) It is the same to them whether you warn them or you do not warn them. They will never believe. (11) You can warn only him who follows the advice and fears Ar Rahmān (the Compassionate) without seeing Him. Give him the glad tidings of forgiveness and a bountiful provision. (12) Verily only We revive the dead and record what they send ahead and the trails they leave. We have meticulously recorded everything in the clear Book.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS ALLĀH'S HOLY PROPHET AND THE QUR'ĀN IS FROM ALLĀH

Only Allāh knows the meaning of *"Yā Sīn"* which is from the "Mutashābihāt" verses. Rebutting those who denied the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh declares, *"By the oath of the wise Qur'ān! You are verily among the messengers on the straight path."* The declaration of Allāh is more than sufficient against the blasphemy of the disbelievers.

Allāh then replies to their rejection of the Qur'ān. Allāh says that the Qur'ān is *"A revelation of the Mighty, the Most Merciful." In* this verse, Allāh refutes the notion of those who refute the divine origin of the Qur'ān.

Allāh then outlines the purpose of revealing the Qur'ān and the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh sent them *"to warn a nation whose forefathers were not warned and who were negligent..."* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent among the Arabs where his duty began. The Arabs were the progeny of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام but no Prophet had come to them for a very long time.

Because no Prophet had come to them for a long time, the Arabs had become negligent of the rights they owed to Allāh. It was therefore necessary for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to direct them onto the straight course.

"The decree has been passed against most of them, so they will not believe." This verse consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, telling him not to grieve about those who do not believe him because Allāh had already decreed that they will never believe.

Allāh then describes one of the punishments the disbelievers will suffer. Allāh says, *"We shall place a yoke around their necks, which reaches to their chins, so their gazes are fixed upwards. We have placed a barrier in front of them and a barrier behind them, and We have enveloped them so they cannot see."* Their hands will also be bound to these yokes, and they will be blind.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that the above punishment will be meted out to them in Hell. He has deduced this from Surah Mu'min, where Allāh says, *"When yokes will be placed around their necks, as well as chains. They will be dragged into the boiling water, after which they will be cast as fuel for the Fire."* This interpretation rules out any metaphorical interpretations.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE REVELATION OF THE ABOVE VERSES

Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once reciting the Qur'ān loudly in the Haram which displeased the polytheists. Some of them decided to harass the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and sneaked behind him to seize him. However, Allāh punished them instead. From their necks downwards, their bodies became paralysed and they all turned blind. They pleaded with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to pray to Allāh to cure them because of their relationship with him. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed to Allāh, their conditions were restored and the above verses were revealed.

According to this narration, the punishment described in the above verse took place in this very world. The punishment in the Hereafter will certainly be much worse.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has also reported that once, Abu Jahl decided to kill the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while he was performing Salāh in the Haram. He took a rock and proceeded to carry out his evil intention. However, as he approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and raised the rock, his hand became firmly stuck to his neck. He returned to his companions, who tried in vain to release the hand from the neck.

Another person then took the rock from him and proceeded to accomplish what Abu Jahl had failed to do. As this person approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh took away his eyesight. As he could not find his way back, his companions had to call him back. Thereafter, a third villain proceeded with the same thought in mind. As he was walking towards the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he suddenly turned back in flight. When his accomplices asked him the reason, he replied that a large camel appeared before him as he approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He told them that he had never seen such a large camel in his, life, and it was ready to devour him if he dared draw closer to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that if the above verses were revealed because of this incident, the specific punishment mentioned in the verse ["*We shall place a yoke around their necks, which reaches to their chins, so their gazes are fixed upwards.*" I is metaphorical and denotes that these people are helpless against Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Thereafter, Allāh says, "*It is the same to them whether you warn them or you do not warn them. They will never believe.*" When people make themselves blind to the truth and deaf to all advice, their hearts cannot be penetrated. It is only possible to "*warn him who follows the advice and fears Rahmān without seeing Him.*" This refers to the believer *(Mu'min)*, who fulfils Allāh's commands and fears retribution for his shortcomings. Allāh declares, "*Give him the glad tidings of forgiveness and a bountiful provision.*"

"*Verily only We revive the dead and record what they send ahead and the trails they leave. We have meticulously recorded everything in the clear Book {the Lawhul Mahfūz (The protected tablet)}.*" Every deed, good or bad, is recorded. The phrase "*the trails they leave*" alludes to the fact that the trails of any deed (good or evil carried out by the deceased) which another person follows, will be recorded in favour of the deceased person (if it is good), or against him (if it is evil).

If a person teaches another to recite the Qur'ān, to perform Salāh, etc, then he will receive the rewards of the second person's Qur'ānic recitation or Salāh even after his death. Similarly, if a person built a Masjid or wrote a religious book, he will continue to receive the rewards of all those who benefit from the Masjid or the book. On the other hand, if a person starts a Bid'ah (religious innovation) or another evil deed, he will be responsible for the sins of all those who emulate him, even if he has left the world.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

that the rewards of the following deeds will continue to accrue to the credit of a person even after his death:

- *Knowledge that he has acquired and spread.*
- *Leaving pious children behind.*
- *Leaving behind a copy of the Qur'ān.*
- *Building an inn for travellers to use (for free).*
- *Digging a well (or any other water source).*
- *Spending in charity while healthy and sick.* [*Ibn Majah p. 22*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also said, "Whoever initiates something good in Islām will accrue the rewards for it, as well as the rewards of all those who emulate his act, without diminishing their rewards in the least. (On the other hand,) Whoever initiates something evil in Islām will accrue the sin for it, as well as the sins of all those who emulate his act, without diminishing their sin in the least." [*Muslim*]

Certain commentators have mentioned that "*the trails they leave* refers to the footprints people leave when they walk to the Masjid for Salāh. Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports that once, some land became vacant round the Masjid during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Banu Salamah tribe, who lived far from the Masjid, decided to occupy the land. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم heard of this, he advised them to remain where they were because their footprints were being recorded i.e. the rewards for every step taken to the Masjid was recorded to their credit. [*"Mishkāt" p. 68*]

وَاضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلًا أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ إِذْ جَآءَهَا ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿13﴾ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْهِمُ ٱثْنَيْنِ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَعَزَّزْنَا بِثَالِثٍ فَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّآ إِلَيْكُم مُّرْسَلُونَ ﴿14﴾ قَالُوا۟ مَآ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ مِن شَىْءٍ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا تَكْذِبُونَ ﴿15﴾ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا يَعْلَمُ إِنَّآ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿16﴾ وَمَا عَلَيْنَآ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿17﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا تَطَيَّرْنَا بِكُمْ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهُوا۟ لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ وَلَيَمَسَّنَّكُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿18﴾ قَالُوا۟ طَٰٓئِرُكُم مَّعَكُمْ أَئِن ذُكِّرْتُم بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿19﴾

(13) Cite to them the parable of the people of the village when the messengers came to them. (14) When We sent two to them, the people falsified them. Thereafter, We strengthened them with a third and they said, "We have certainly been sent as messengers to you people." (15) The people said, "You are merely humans like ourselves. Allāh has not revealed anything. You are only lying." (16) They replied, "Our Lord knows that We have been sent as messengers to you people." (17) "Clear propagation is our only responsibility." (18) The people

said, "We augur an evil omen from you. If you do not desist, we will surely stone you and a painful punishment from us will definitely afflict you. (19) The messengers said, "Your omen is with you. Is it an evil omen that you have been given advice? You are but a transgressing nation."

THE INSOLENCE OF A NATION TOWARDS ALLĀH'S MESSENGERS

The above verses cite the epic of the inhabitants of a town (probably Antioch), to whom Allāh sent two messengers. Certain commentators have mentioned that these two were not Prophets عليهم السلام but two disciples of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Because they set out on the instruction of Allāh's messenger (acting on Allāh's orders), Allāh says, *"When We sent two to them, the people falsified them."*

Other commentators say that the two were Prophet عليه السلام. Nevertheless, the people of the town refused to listen to them, after which Allāh *"strengthened them with a third and they (collectively) said, 'We have certainly been sent as messengers to you people."*

However, *"The people said, 'You are merely humans like ourselves. Allāh has not revealed anything. You are only lying."'*

The messengers replied, *"Our Lord knows that We have been sent as messengers to you people. Clear propagation is our only responsibility (we have a duty to fulfil irrespective of your response)."*

"The people said, 'We augur an evil omen from you.'" They said this because they blamed the messengers for the split in their community. Commentators also say that because of their sinful ways, Allāh punished these people by causing certain calamities and disasters to befall them. However, they blamed the messengers for this. They also added, *"If you do not desist, we will surely stone you (to death) and a painful punishment from us will definitely afflict you."*

The three messengers replied, *"Your omen is with you."* They told the people that the evil that affects them is a result of their own devices which they cannot attribute to the messengers. The only work that the messengers did was advise the people. Therefore, they asked, *'Is it an evil omen that you have been given advice? You are but a transgressing nation (your transgression in disbelief has landed you in the predicament you find yourselves in)."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that auguring omens is an act of polytheism *(shirk)*. However, the statement of the three messengers was merely in response to the earlier statement of the people.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

PART TWENTY-THREE

وَجَآءَ مِنْ أَقْصَا ٱلْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَىٰ قَالَ يَـٰقَوْمِ ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ (20) ٱتَّبِعُوا۟
مَن لَّا يَسْـَٔلُكُمْ أَجْرًا وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ (21) وَمَا لِىَ لَآ أَعْبُدُ ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنِى وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ
(22) ءَأَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةً إِن يُرِدْنِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنُ بِضُرٍّ لَّا تُغْنِ عَنِّى شَفَـٰعَتُهُمْ
شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يُنقِذُونِ (23) إِنِّىٓ إِذًا لَّفِى ضَلَـٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ (24) إِنِّىٓ ءَامَنتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ
فَٱسْمَعُونِ (25) قِيلَ ٱدْخُلِ ٱلْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَـٰلَيْتَ قَوْمِى يَعْلَمُونَ (26) بِمَا غَفَرَ لِى رَبِّى
وَجَعَلَنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُكْرَمِينَ (27) ۞ وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ مِن جُندٍ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
وَمَا كُنَّا مُنزِلِينَ (28) إِن كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ خَـٰمِدُونَ (29) يَـٰحَسْرَةً
عَلَى ٱلْعِبَادِ مَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ (30) أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ كَمْ
أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ (31) وَإِن كُلٌّ لَّمَّا جَمِيعٌ لَّدَيْنَا
مُحْضَرُونَ (32)

(20) A man came running from the farthest end of the town saying, "O my people! Follow the messengers." (21) "Follow those who do not ask for any payment from you, and who are rightly guided." (22) "Why should I not worship the One Who has created me, and to Whom you all shall return?" (23) "Why should I take another as deity besides Him? If Ar Rahmān (the Compassionate) intends any harm to reach me, their intercession will not help me in the least, nor can they rescue me." (24) "I would then surely be in manifest deviation." (25) "I have certainly believed in your Lord, so listen to me." (26) It was said, "Enter Jannah (Heaven)." He said, "If only my people had known... (27) "...because of what my Lord had forgiven me and made me from among the honoured ones!" (28) We did not dispatch any army against his nation after him, nor were We going to. (29) It was only a single scream after which they were suddenly extinguished. (30) What anguish about My bondsmen! They mock every Prophet that comes to them. (31) Have they not seen how many were the nations that We destroyed before them? They will certainly never return to them. (32) They will all be present before Us collectively.

A MAN FROM THE TOWN ADVISES THE PEOPLE TO ACCEPT THE CALL OF THE MESSENGERS

When the people of the town rejected the message of the messengers,

"A man came running from the farthest end of the town saying, 'O my people! Follow the messengers." He told them that the messengers were sincere, *"do not ask for any payment"* and *"are rightly guided."* It is for these reasons that they should be followed.

Then, making reference to himself, the man urged them to worship Allāh. He said, *"Why should I not worship the One Who has created me, and to Whom you all shall return?"* He tried to impress upon their minds that Only Allāh is worthy of worship because He has created the universe, and that it would be foolish to worship any other being, especially with the knowledge that everyone has to return to Allāh.

Since the people were polytheists, he addressed them further saying, *"Why should I take another as deity besides Him? If Ar Rahmān (the Compassionate) intends any harm to reach me, their (the false god's) intercession will not help me in the least, nor can they rescue me. (If I were to take others as deities,) I would then surely be in manifest deviation."* Without directly saying it, he presented the message to them that they were astray by worshipping helpless beings.

He then declared his faith saying, *'I have certainly believed in your Lord, so listen to me."* Instead of saying *"my Lord,"* he said *"your Lord"* so that they take note of the fact that they should also be worshipping Allāh;

He therefore made them aware of the following facts:

- That they should worship only Allāh Who created them.
- That they will have to return to Allāh.
- The other gods are helpless.
- They have all deviated.
- They should adhere to the correct religion.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the people attacked him when he said this to them and killed him. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه says that they trampled him so violently that his intestines were exposed .

After he had attained the lofty rank of martyrdom, *'it was said (to him), 'Enter Heaven.'* He said, *'If only my people had known because of what my Lord had forgiven me and made me from among the honoured ones!"* Despite what they did to him, he wished that they could also have accepted Islām, be forgiven and honoured with entry into Heaven.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that, after the people martyred him, Allāh instructed Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام to punish them. Jibr'īl علیه السلام gave a loud scream and they all perished. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"We did not dispatch any army against his nation after him, nor were We going to. It was only a single scream after which they were suddenly extinguished."*

This epic was to be a lesson for humanity until Judgment day. Allāh does not require troops and an elaborate arsenal to destroy people. All He did in this case was a scream. Allāh can do anything by merely intending it, but He destroyed them by means of a scream for a reason known to Him. Whereas these people were once brimming with pride and arrogance, they now lay dead like an extinguished fire, with no trace but ashes.

The fact that this person was instructed to enter Heaven shows that he was from that fortunate group of people who will enter Heaven without reckoning and will not even be required to wait for Judgment day. This is not too much to expect from Allāh's mercy. However, other commentators have mentioned that the command *"Enter Heaven"* is a glad tiding to him, informing him that he will be admitted to Heaven on the Day of Judgment. Therefore, he wished his people well after experiencing the bliss of being honoured in the grave.

"We did not dispatch any army against his nation after him, nor were We going to." This verse proves that Allāh does not always send the angels to destroy a nation. However, there are occasions (like the battle of Badr) when Allāh dispatched an army of angels to deal with the disbelievers.

"What anguish about My bondsmen!" An expression like this is usually used when a person regrets the loss of something worthwhile. This is merely an expression people use, but Allāh is free of anguish and remorse. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has mentioned interpretations of this expression, one of them being that the phrase actually means: "O people! Express your anguish about the condition of My bondsmen because *"They mock every Prophet that comes to them."* He then writes that this interpretation appears most appropriate.

"Have they (the Makkan polytheists) *not seen how many were the nations that We destroyed before them? They will certainly never return to them."* The Quraysh often passed by the ruins of previously destroyed nations. These people will never return to the properties that they left behind, which did not assist them when Allāh's punishment came.

"They will all be present before Us collectively." After these people were destroyed in this world, they still have to face Allāh on the Day of Judgment. They will then be proven guilty beyond any doubt and condemned to eternal punishment in Hell.

LESSONS LEARNT FROM THIS INCIDENT

Allāh sent a third messenger to strengthen the two. This teaches people that the work of propagation is more effectively accomplished in groups, rather than individually. Although a person can preach on his own (and will be rewarded for it) there are greater benefits in preaching in groups.

Another lesson learnt from the behaviour of the person from the far end of the town is that people of a locality should actively support the efforts of preachers.

"Follow those who do not ask any payment from you, and who are rightly guided." This teaches people that preachers of religion should never ask people for anything. They should carry their own provisions with them and make their own

arrangements for boarding and lodging. They should also never desire anything from the people.

In numerous verses, the Qur'ān quotes the statement of the Prophets عليهم السلام, where they told the people, *"I do not ask you for any remuneration for this. My remuneration is the responsibility of Allāh, the Lord of the universe."*

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Surah Saba saying, *"Say, 'You can keep whatever payment I may have asked of you. My recompense is Allāh's responsibility, and He is Witness over all things."* [*Surah 34, verse 47*]

Allāh instructs in Surah Sād, *"Say, 'I do not ask you people for any remuneration for this, and I am not amongst those who pretend."* [*Surah 38, verse 86*]

The above verse also teaches people that the person who preaches should himself be *"rightly guided."* If this is the case, his preaching will be more effective and people will not be able to point fingers at him.

A preacher must also address people in a manner pleasing to them. The person in the incident addressed them as *"O my people!"* By saying this, he won their attention because they regarded him as a part of them.

Although he was referring to the disbelief of the people, the person used his own name when he said, *"Why should I not worship the One Who has created me..."* He did not say, *"Why should you people not worship the One Who has created you."* In this manner, he drove the message home and proved to them the reasons for worshipping Allāh. Since he was addressing them after all, he added, *"and to Whom you all shall return?"* He did not say, *"to Whom I shall return."* Thereby, he urged them to reconsider their plight.

By saying that if he left the true religion, *'I would then surely be in manifest deviation,"* he intended to tell them that they were astray by remaining as polytheists.

He then declared his faith saying, *'I have certainly believed in your Lord, so listen to* me." Instead of saying *"my Lord,"* he said *"your Lord"* so that they take note of the fact that they should also be worshipping Allāh. In this way, they will realise that worshipping other gods will lead them to destruction.

Allāh inspires the hearts of people who preach His Dīn (*religion*) sincerely so that they address people in a most befitting and cordial manner. They are then able to address people in a manner that is effective and not offensive.

وَءَايَةٌ لَّهُمُ ٱلْأَرْضُ ٱلْمَيْتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَٰهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾
وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا جَنَّٰتٍ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَٰبٍ وَفَجَّرْنَا فِيهَا مِنَ ٱلْعُيُونِ ﴿٣٤﴾ لِيَأْكُلُوا۟
مِن ثَمَرِهِۦ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۖ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلْأَزْوَٰجَ
كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنۢبِتُ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

(33) Dead earth is a sign for them. We revive it and extract grains from it, which you eat. (34) We place orchards of date palms and grapes on earth and cause springs to gush forth... (35) ....so that they may eat from its fruit, even though their hands have not made it. Will they not be grateful? (36) That Allāh is Pure Who created every couple that the earth grows, from among people, and other things about which they have no knowledge.

ALLĀH REVIVES BARREN FIELDS AND CREATED EVERYTHING THAT GROWS ON EARTH

There are various signs of Allāh's great powers everywhere. Allāh says, *"Dead earth is* (also) *a sign for them. We revive it and extract grains from it, which you eat."* When certain parts of the earth become parched and lifeless because of a lack of water, Allāh revives the land by sending a little rain. Thereafter, the crops begin to flourish, providing food for thousands of men and animals. Allāh also discusses some of the other products of the land, when He says, *"We place orchards of date palms and grapes on earth, and cause springs to gush forth."* These springs (and other water sources) irrigate the fields for years thereafter, from which man continuously benefits.

Allāh says that He has provided these things for people *"So that they may eat from its fruit, even though their hands have not made it."* Man has no share in the growing of the seeds after they have been planted. It is only Allāh Who makes them sprout, grow and flourish. This demands that man be grateful to Allāh. It is for this reason that Allāh asks, *"Will they not be grateful?"*

"That Allāh is Pure (from all defects) Who created every couple that the earth grows, from among people, and other things about which they have no knowledge." Allāh has created every living pair among man and plant. He created everything that man has knowledge of, as well as everything about which man has no knowledge. Every creature is part of Allāh's creation.

وَءَايَةٌ لَّهُمُ ٱلَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُم مُّظْلِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَٱلشَّمْسُ تَجْرِى لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْعَلِيمِ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنَٰهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَٱلْعُرْجُونِ ٱلْقَدِيمِ ﴿٣٩﴾ لَا ٱلشَّمْسُ يَنۢبَغِى لَهَآ أَن تُدْرِكَ ٱلْقَمَرَ وَلَا ٱلَّيْلُ سَابِقُ ٱلنَّهَارِ ۚ وَكُلٌّ فِى فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

(37) The night is a sign for them. We draw the day out of it and they are suddenly left in darkness. (38) The sun travels towards its destination. This is the decree of the Mighty, the All Knowing. (39) We have stipulated phases for the moon, until it returns like a branch of a old date palm. (40) It is not possible for the sun to catch the moon, nor is it possible for the night to precede the day. They all swim within their orbits.

THE DAY, NIGHT, SUN AND MOON ARE ALL MANIFESTATIONS OF ALLĀH'S POWER

After discussing earthly phenomenon, Allāh proceeds to discuss heavenly bodies. Allāh begins by saying, *"The night is a sign for them."* By studying the alternation of night and day, people will realise that Allāh controls their precise systematic timing.

"We draw the day out of it and they are suddenly left in darkness." When Allāh extracts the light of day, the night begins to appear, which eventually envelopes everything.

"The sun travels towards its destination." While the sun and its phenomenal radiance are sufficient to denote Allāh' s great power, the orbit and motion of the sun are separate signs altogether. Allāh has created it so perfectly, that it cannot shift an inch from its designated orbit in space.

"This is the decree of the Mighty, the All Knowing." Allāh has predetermined the pattern in which the sun rotates and orbits. During the summer months, the position of the sun on the horizon is different and this position changes during the winter months. This does not vary over the years.

Certain commentators have stated that *"its destination"* refers to the fixed annual pattern that the sun follows in its orbit. Others say that the sun travels to a certain limit in the west, after which it returns to another limit in the east. Each limit is referred to as a *"destination."*

Another group of commentators are of the opinion that the *"destination"* refers to the position of the sun as it reaches each of the twelve zodiac stars and moves to the other. Some say that this refers to the specific time when the sun completes its prescribed course. It will then cease to exist.

THE PROSTRATION OF THE SUN

The above are all opinions. The truth of the matter is contained in a hadith that Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه has reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He reports that once when the sun set, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him if he knew where the sun went to. Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه replied, "Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم know best."

Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Indeed, the sun travels until it reaches beneath Allāh's throne, where it prostrates.

It then seeks Allāh's permission to rise from the east as normal. It is then granted leave. The day will occur when it will be denied permission, after which it will rise from whence it set (the west). This is the meaning of *'The sun travels towards its destination.' Its destination is beneath Allāh 's throne."* [Bukhari and Muslim]

Some people have objected to this hadith by saying that modern instruments, constantly monitoring the sun's motion, have not detected this period of the sun's prostration. It must be noted that nothing can be allowed to overrule a statement of the Ahadīth. It should also be noted that the possibility exists that this period of prostration is so brief and inconspicuous that even

instruments can not detect it.

This hadith also refutes that interpretation of certain people who say that the sun reaches its *"destination"* only once annually.

NOTE: It will be an act of disbelief to refute the fact that the sun moves, because the Qur'ān establishes this fact. However, the Qur'ān does not state that the earth is in motion. Whereas Surah Naml states that the earth is *"stable* - this does not mean that it is stationary in space, but stationary for the people living on earth, thereby allowing them to accomplish their various tasks with ease. This is the interpretation of the verse of Surah Luqmān where Allāh says that He placed the mountains on earth so that it does not shake with its inhabitants.

THE PHASES OF THE MOON

"We have stipulated phases for the moon, until it returns like a branch of an old date palm." The waxing and waning of the moon takes place with great precision and at the beginning and end of each lunar month, it appears withered like a dry branch of a date palm.

Emphasising the clockwork precision of the sun and moon, Allāh says, *"It is not possible for the sun to catch the moon, nor is it possible for the night to precede the day."* This means that the day cannot erase the night until the night ends, and vice versa. Neither the day, nor the night can work in opposition to Allāh's system. Allāh has prescribed certain periods when the night and day vary, which neither has the ability to contravene.

"They all swim within their orbits." This makes it clear that the orbits of the sun and the moon are spherical.

وَءَايَةٌ لَّهُمْ أَنَّا حَمَلْنَا ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ فِي ٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلْمَشْحُونِ (41) وَخَلَقْنَا لَهُم مِّن مِّثْلِهِۦ مَا يَرْكَبُونَ (42) وَإِن نَّشَأْ نُغْرِقْهُمْ فَلَا صَرِيخَ لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنقَذُونَ (43) إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا وَمَتَٰعًا إِلَىٰ حِينٍ (44) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَمَا خَلْفَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ (45) وَمَا تَأْتِيهِم مِّنْ ءَايَةٍ مِّنْ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ (46) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنُطْعِمُ مَن لَّوْ يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ أَطْعَمَهُۥٓ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ (47)

(41) A sign for them is that We have carried their progeny on board the crowded ark. (42) And We have made conveyances for them like the ark, which they board. (43) If We will, We could drown them and they will have no helper nor shall they be rescued... (44) ... except by Our mercy and for their enjoyment for a little while. (45) When they are told, "Fear what is before you and what is

behind you so that mercy may be shown to you," (they refuse to accept). (46) They are averse to every sign of their Lord that comes to them. (47) When they are told, "Spend from what Allāh has provided for you," the disbelievers say to the believers, "Should we feed someone whom Allāh will feed if He wills?" You are but in manifest deviation.

SHIPS ARE FROM ALLĀH'S BOUNTY, AND ONLY HE CAN RESCUE WHOEVER HE WILLS FROM DROWNING

Allāh has inspired man to build ships and other marine vessels which are invaluable. Without them it would have been impossible for man to reach other continents, let alone transport goods across the oceans. Allāh says, *"And We have made conveyances for them like the ark, which they board."* The discussion of the various animals Allāh has created for transport are discussed in Surah Nahl, where Allāh says, *"Horses, mules and donkeys are for riding and adornment. And He creates such things about which you have no knowledge."* This verse also predicts the invention (by Allāh's inspiration) of modern forms of transportation like cars, trains, trucks, planes, etc.

Allāh then adds that only He can protect people when they travel. He says, *"If We will, We could drown them and they will have no helper nor shall they be rescued; except by Our mercy and for their enjoyment for a little while."* Allāh may rescue them if the time for their death has not yet arrived. They will then live on until their times elapses.

THE DEPRIVATION OF THOSE WHO ARE AVERSE

"When they (the disbelievers) are told, 'Fear what is before you (the dangers and calamities of life) and what is behind you (in the Hereafter) so that mercy be shown to you' (they refuse to accept and) They are averse to every sign of their Lord that comes to them."

"When they are told, 'Spend from what Allāh has provided for you,' the disbelievers (mockingly) say to the believers, 'Should we feed someone whom Allāh will feed if He wills?' You are but in manifest deviation." These people are really extremely miserly and do not wish to part with their wealth. This verse proves that even the disbelievers accepted the fact that Allāh is the Sustainers.

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾ مَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً
تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾
وَنُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنسِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَا مَنۢ
بَعَثَنَا مِن مَّرْقَدِنَا ۜ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَصَدَقَ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ إِن كَانَتْ
إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ جَمِيعٌ لَّدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَٱلْيَوْمَ لَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْـًٔا
وَلَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

(48) They say, "When will this promise come to pass, if you are truthful." (49) They await only a single scream to seize them while they are arguing. (50) They will then be unable to make any bequest, nor shall they return to their families. (51) The trumpet will be blown, when they will scurry to their Lord from their graves. (52) They will say, "Alas to our destruction! Who has raised us from our graves? This is what Ar Rahmān (the Compassionate) has promised, and the messengers spoke the truth." (53) It will be only single scream, after which they will all suddenly appear before Us. (54) On this day, no soul shall be oppressed in the least, and they will receive retribution only for what they did.

REFUTING THOSE WHO REJECT RESURRECTION

"They say, 'When will this promise (the Judgment day) come to pass, if you are truthful." In an effort to justify their rejection of the Judgment day, the disbelievers requested a date to be specified for the Judgment day to prove the truth of its advent. Of course, this request could prove nothing.

Allāh says, *"They await only a single scream to seize them while they are arguing."* Their rejection of the Judgment day will not affect the advent of Judgment day itself. The Judgment day will certainly take place even though they may argue about it. The Judgment day will then seize them so suddenly that *"They will then be unable to make any bequest, nor shall they return to their families."*

THE STATE OF CONFUSION WHEN THE TRUMPET WILL BE SOUNDED

"The trumpet will be blown, when they will scurry to their Lord from their graves. They (the sinful and disbelievers) will say, 'Alas to our destruction! Who has raised us from our graves? This is what Ar Rahmān (the Compassionate) has promised, and the messengers spoke the truth."

Allāh then says, *'It* (the second sounding of the trumpet) *will be only single scream, after which they will all suddenly appear before Us."* Reckoning will then commence, when every person will be punished for his/her sins and rewarded for good deeds. Allāh says, *"On this day, no soul shall be oppressed in the least, and they will receive retribution only for what they did."*

Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"They will find their deeds present, and your Lord shall not oppress anyone."* [*Surah 18, verse 50*]

إِنَّ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلْيَوْمَ فِى شُغُلٍ فَٰكِهُونَ ﴿55﴾ هُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُهُمْ فِى ظِلَٰلٍ عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ
مُتَّكِـُٔونَ ﴿56﴾ لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَٰكِهَةٌ وَلَهُم مَّا يَدَّعُونَ ﴿57﴾ سَلَٰمٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبٍّ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿58﴾

(55) Verily the people of Heaven will be joyous in their occupation on this day. (56) They, together with their spouses will be resting on couches in the shade. (57) There they will have fruits and whatever they request. (58) They will have a greeting of peace from the Most Merciful Lord.

THE BOUNTIES FOR THE PEOPLE OF HEAVEN

"Verily the people of Heaven will be joyous in their occupation on this day." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that preoccupation with the bounties of the Hereafter will make a person oblivious of everything else imaginable. Some commentators have translated the Arabic word 'fākihūn' (translated above as *'joyous")* as "enjoying the fruit of Heaven".

"They, together with their spouses will be resting on couches in the shade." Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah that the couches and thrones that the people of Heaven shall occupy will be woven with gold and will face each other.

Further describing the bounties, Allāh says, *"There they will have fruits and whatever they request."* The bounties of Heaven will therefore not be confined to what is mentioned in the Qur'ān and Ahadīth. A person will receive whatever else his heart desires.

A verse of Surah Zukhruf reads: *"in Heaven there shall be whatever the heart desires and whatever pleases the eye."* [*Surah 43, verse 70*]

Best of all will be that *"They will have a greeting of peace from the Most Merciful Lord."* Allāh will personally greet the people in Heaven.

Sayyidina Jābir رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that while the people of Heaven will be engrossed in its bounties, they will suddenly behold a bright light above. When they look upwards, they will notice that Allāh has turned His attention to them. Allāh will then Say, peace be on you, O people of Heaven." [*"Mishkāt" p. 502*]

وَامْتَازُوا الْيَوْمَ أَيُّهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا
الشَّيْطَانَ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿٦٠﴾ وَأَنِ اعْبُدُونِي ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾ وَلَقَدْ
أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبِلًّا كَثِيرًا ۖ أَفَلَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ هَٰذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ
تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ اصْلَوْهَا الْيَوْمَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ
وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَطَمَسْنَا
عَلَىٰ أَعْيُنِهِمْ فَاسْتَبَقُوا الصِّرَاطَ فَأَنَّىٰ يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَمَسَخْنَاهُمْ
عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِهِمْ فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا مُضِيًّا وَلَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَمَنْ نُعَمِّرْهُ
نُنَكِّسْهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ ۖ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

(59) "Separate yourselves today, O you criminals!" (60) "O children of Ādam! Did I not emphasise to you that you should not worship Satan? He is certainly your open enemy." (61) "And (did I not emphasise to you) that you should worship only Me? This is the straight path." (62) "He has misled a large group

from you. Did you not have any intelligence to understand?" (63) "This is Hell about which you were warned." (64) "Enter it today because you used to disbelieve." (65) On this day We shall seal their mouths. Their hands will speak to Us and their legs will testify to what they earned. (66) If We will, We shall obliterate their eyes. They will run to the path, but how will they see? (67) If We will, We will transfigure them as they stand and they will be unable to go ahead or backwards. (68) He whom We advance in age, We diminish in structure. Do they not understand?

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIMINALS

After describing the condition of the people of Heaven, Allāh talks about those condemned to Hell. Allāh will tell them, *"Separate yourselves today, O you criminals!"* Although they may have lived with the believers in the world, and they may stand up with them after emerging from their graves, Allāh will command them to separate from the believers because their destination will be different.

Sayyidina Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه once spent the entire night repeating this verse in his Optional Salāh. He was concerned because this announcement will be most crucial and will determine whether people will be in Heaven or in Hell.

The disbelievers will then be addressed thus: *"O children of Ādam! Did I not emphasise to you that you should not worship (obey) Satan? He is certainly your open enemy. And (did I not emphasise to you) that you should worship only Me? This is the straight path. He (Satan) has misled a large group from you. Did you not have any intelligence to understand? (As a result of following him, you should know that) This is Hell, which you were warned of. Enter it today because you used to disbelieve."*

THE LIMBS OF THE SINNERS WILL TESTIFY AGAINST THEM

Further describing the torment of the disbelievers on the Judgment day, Allāh says, *"On this day We shall seal their mouths. Their hands will speak to Us and their legs will testify to what (i.e. to the sins) they earned."*

Allāh says in Surah Nūr, *"The day when their tongues, their hands and their legs will testify against them with regard to what they did."* There is no discrepancy between this verse and the one under discussion because there will be various stages on the Judgment day, each one being different from the other. Each verse describes a different stage. At times, the tongue will be sealed to allow other limbs to testify. At other times, the tongue will be allowed to admit to the sins it perpetrated.

"If We will, We shall obliterate their eyes. They will run to the path, but how will they see? If We will, We will transfigure them as they stand and they will be unable to go ahead or backwards." In these two verses, Allāh describes the fact that He can punish people in this very world as well. This punishment can assume various forms. Allāh can remove their eyes from their faces, thereby making their faces smooth without eyes. Allāh also has the power to transform them into other creatures, like He transfigured previous nations into pigs and monkeys. They will then be deprived of all their senses and will be unable to move about.

AS MAN GROWS OLD, HE BECOMES PHYSICALLY WEAK RETROGRESSES

"He whom We advance in age, We diminish in structure. Do they not understand?" As man advances in age, he gradually loses the faculties he possesses. He slowly becomes deaf, weak sighted and weak in physical strength. His skin begins to lose its tautness and hangs loosely. He eventually begins to even lose his faculty of understanding. By this gradual decline, man can understand that Allāh is capable of completely disfiguring a person or taking away his eyesight.

وَمَا عَلَّمْنَٰهُ ٱلشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُۥٓ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿69﴾ لِّيُنذِرَ مَن كَانَ
حَيًّا وَيَحِقَّ ٱلْقَوْلُ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿70﴾

(69) We did not teach him poetry, nor is it befitting of him. This is but advice and the clear Qur'ān... (70) ... to warn him who is living, and to establish proof against the disbelievers.

POETRY IS NOT BEFITTING OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AND THE QUR'ĀN GIVES ADVICE

Even though the Arabs realised that the Qur'ān was not poetry, they still claimed that it was poetry to prevent others from accepting Islām. Allāh replied to their claim by saying, *"We did not teach him* [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *poetry, nor is it befitting of him."* Poetry consists of imaginary figments of the mind and thus can present untruths. Such speech is certainly not befitting for a Prophet of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The Qur'ān is also not a piece of poetry because it is without any imaginary subjects. Its composition is of the highest eloquence, while the subject matter is certain truth. However, when people want to object, they will not see the truth.

Allāh says, *"This is but advice and the clear Qur'ān, to warn him who is living* (i.e. who has intelligence and is prepared to accept the truth), *and establish proof against the disbelievers."* Therefore, when the disbelievers will make excuses on the Judgment day, they will be told that Allāh's Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān had come to them, but they refused to accept. They had therefore subjected themselves to punishment.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُم مِّمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَآ أَنْعَٰمًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مَٰلِكُونَ ﴿71﴾ وَذَلَّلْنَٰهَا
لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ ﴿72﴾ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مَنَٰفِعُ وَمَشَارِبُ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ
﴿73﴾ وَٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ءَالِهَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿74﴾ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَهُمْ
وَهُمْ لَهُمْ جُندٌ مُّحْضَرُونَ ﴿75﴾ فَلَا يَحْزُنكَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِنَّا نَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا

(71) Do they not see that, from Our hand's work, We have created animals for them and they are its masters. (72) We placed these animals at their service; some of them are their means of transport, while they eat some. (73) From these animals, they derive many benefits and drinks. Are they not grateful? (74) They adopt various gods besides Allāh so that they may be assisted. (75) They are unable to render any assistance to them, and they will be a ready army against them. (76) Let not their speech grieve you. Indeed We are Aware of what they conceal and what they reveal.

ANIMALS ARE ALLĀH'S BOUNTY TO MAN

Allāh says, *'Do they not see that, from Our hand's work, We have created animals for them and they are its masters?"* Although Allāh is the True Master of everything, He has made man the interim masters of animals. Since man does not have complete mastery over these animals and other commodities, he will have to follow Allāh's commands concerning their treatment. He cannot do as he pleases.

"We placed these animals at their service; some of them are their means of transport, while they eat of some." Man appreciates Allāh's subjugation of these animals only when he loses control of them. Man then realises that if it were not for Allāh, he would not have any control of these animals. It is for this reason that the following Supplication is recited when mounting one's conveyance:

{TRANSLATION: "Pure is Allāh, Who has subjugated this for us whereas we would never have been able to control it and our return shall certainly be to our Lord."}

Allāh says further, *"From these animals, they derive many benefits and drinks (milk). Are they not grateful."* Some of the many benefits of animals are:

- They are a means of transport.
- They may be consumed as food.
- Their skins may be used as clothing, bedding and rugs.
- They are helpful in ploughing fields.
- They are helpful in irrigating fields.
- They provide milk.

The verse refers to milk as *"drinks"* (i.e. in a plural form). The reason for this is that various types of milk are derived from various animals. From this milk, man also makes butter, cheese, yoghurt, etc.

Other commentators have mentioned that the word 'mashārib' (translated above as *"drinks")* may also be translated as "utensils." It was common in the past (and still in many areas of the world today), that people used the hides of animals to make utensils, water bags, etc.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE POLYTHEISTS

"They adopt various gods besides Allāh so that they may be assisted. They (these gods) are unable to render any assistance to them, and they will be ready army against them." On the Judgment day, these false gods will testify against those who worshipped them, becoming their opponents.

Allāh says in Surah Maryam, *"Leaving Allāh, they adopt many gods so that these may be a token of honour for them. This will never be! They will soon reject their worship and become adversaries to them."* [*Surah 19, verses 8 1,82*]

Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم saying, *"Let not their speech grieve you. Indeed We are aware of what they conceal and what they reveal."* Accordingly, Allāh will punish them for their sins.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَٰهُ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿77﴾ وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِىَ خَلْقَهُۥ ۖ قَالَ مَن يُحْىِ ٱلْعِظَٰمَ وَهِىَ رَمِيمٌ ﴿78﴾ قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَهَآ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿79﴾ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلشَّجَرِ ٱلْأَخْضَرِ نَارًا فَإِذَآ أَنتُم مِّنْهُ تُوقِدُونَ ﴿80﴾ أَوَلَيْسَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِقَٰدِرٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُم ۚ بَلَىٰ وَهُوَ ٱلْخَلَّٰقُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿81﴾ إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهُۥٓ إِذَآ أَرَادَ شَيْـًٔا أَن يَقُولَ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿82﴾ فَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِى بِيَدِهِۦ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿83﴾

(77) Has man not seen that We created him from a seed, and now he is suddenly an open adversary? (78) He coins similitude's for Us and forgets himself He says, "Who will give life to bones after they have decomposed?" (79) Say, "The One Who gave life to it the first time will revive it. He has knowledge of all things." (80) He Who created fire for you from a green tree from which you suddenly kindle fires. (81) Does the One Who created the heavens and the earth not have the power to create the likes of them? Why not? He is the Prolific Creator, the All Knowing. (82) When He wills anything, His only command is to say, "Be!" and it comes into being. (83) Pure is that Being in Whose hand lies the reins of everything, and to Whom you will all be returned.

FORGETTING HOW HE WAS CREATED, MAN REFUTES THE ADVENT OF JUDGMENT DAY

A polytheist by the name of Ās bin Wā'il once came to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم with a decomposing bone. He crushed the bone before the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم saying, "Will Allāh revives this bone after I have thrown it away?" The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, "Yes, Allāh will certainly revive it. He will then take your life, resurrect you, and throw you into Hell." It was

then that Allāh revealed all the verses above. "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v.23 p.53*) mentions the names of various other people regarding whom these verses may have been revealed.

Allāh says, *"Has man not seen that We created him from a seed...."* When man accepts the fact that Allāh has created him from a sperm cell, why should it be difficult for him to accept that Allāh can also reconstruct the decayed cells of his body to resurrect him? However, man seems to forget this and opposes the Prophets عليهم السلام when they remind him of these things. Therefore, Allāh says that man becomes *"an open adversary."*

Allāh continues, *"He* (man) *coins similitude's for Us and forgets himself He says, 'Who will give life to bones after they have decomposed?"'* Forgetting that Allāh created him from a lowly sperm, man has the audacity to question Allāh's ability to resurrect him for Judgment day.

Allāh says, *"Say, 'The One Who gave life to it (these bones) the first time will revive it. He has knowledge of all things. "'*Allāh knows exactly where a molecule of any substance will be at any given moment. It will therefore be simple for Him to reconstruct every person as he was:

"He Who created fire for you from a green tree..." Although green trees are filled with moisture, which normally does not make fire,

Allāh can still create fire from them. No task is difficult for Allāh, not even the task of resurrecting the dead.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that two trees exist, called the 'Murkh' and the 'Ifār.' These trees are so succulent in nature that water drips from them. However, fire is created when the branch of one is rubbed against the branch of the other. People used these to ignite their fires in the past. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"...a green tree from which you suddenly kindle fires."*

Allāh then presents another proof to substantiate the advent of Judgment day. Allāh says, *"Does the One Who created the heavens and the earth not have the power to create the likes of them? Why not? He is the Prolific Creator, the All Knowing."* It is foolish to believe that a Being Who can create such large and powerful phenomenon like the heavens and the earth cannot resurrect a man!

"When He wills anything, His only command is to say, 'Be!' and it comes into being." When Allāh can create magnificent masterpieces by merely saying, "Kun! *("Be!)"*, how can one believe that He cannot resurrect people?

"Pure (from defects) *is that Being in Whose hand lies the reins of everything* (including resurrection), *and to Whom you will all be returned."* Rejecting the advent of Judgment day will subject one to punishment in the Hereafter, when everyone will be presented before Allāh.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

سورة الصّٰفّٰت

Makkan	Surah As-Saffat	. Verses 182

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالصَّٰٓفَّٰتِ صَفًّا ﴿1﴾ فَالزَّٰجِرَٰتِ زَجْرًا ﴿2﴾ فَالتَّٰلِيَٰتِ ذِكْرًا ﴿3﴾ إِنَّ إِلَٰهَكُمْ لَوَٰحِدٌ ﴿4﴾ رَّبُّ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ الْمَشَٰرِقِ ﴿5﴾ إِنَّا زَيَّنَّا السَّمَآءَ الدُّنْيَا بِزِينَةٍ الْكَوَاكِبِ ﴿6﴾ وَحِفْظًا مِّن كُلِّ شَيْطَٰنٍ مَّارِدٍ ﴿7﴾ لَّا يَسَّمَّعُونَ إِلَى الْمَلَإِ الْأَعْلَىٰ وَيُقْذَفُونَ مِن كُلِّ جَانِبٍ ﴿8﴾ دُحُورًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ وَاصِبٌ ﴿9﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ خَطِفَ الْخَطْفَةَ فَأَتْبَعَهُۥ شِهَابٌ ثَاقِبٌ ﴿10﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) By the oath of those angels who stand in rows! (2) And by those angels who censure! (3) And by those angels who recite the 'reminder'! (4) Without doubt, your Deity is One. (5) He is the Lord of the heavens, the earth, whatever is between the two and He is the Lord of the points of the sun's rising. (6) Verily, We decorated the sky of this world with the adornment of the stars. (7) As a protection from every rebellious Satan. (8) They cannot eavesdrop on those (angels) of the upper heights and are pelted from every direction. (9) (They are) Repelled and shall have an eternal punishment. (10) Except for the one who snatches something and a flaming spark pursues him.

ALLĀH IS THE ONLY DEITY AND HE IS THE LORD OF EVERYTHING

Allāh takes an oath by various categories of angels to emphasise that He is the Only Deity. Allāh begins by saying, *"By the oath of those angels who stand in rows!"* These angels remain in this formation to worship Allāh.

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once told the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضی اللہ عنہم, *"Will you not form rows like the angels do in front of Allāh?"*

When the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضی اللہ عنہم asked how the angels form their rows, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, *"They first complete the rows in front,*

and stand close together." ["*Mishkāt*" *p. 98*]

"And by those angels who censure!" The Arabic word 'zajar' (translated above as *"who censure"*) also means to prevent and stop. The author of "Ruhul Ma'ani" writes that these are the angels who prevent people from sinning, prevent Satan's evil influences, and inspire people to do good deeds.

"And by those angels who recite the 'reminder'!" These are the angels who recite Allāh's scriptures to the Prophets عليهم السلام. They convey the scriptures from Allāh to the Prophets عليهم السلام. Another interpretation is that they are those angels who are engaged in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* and glorifying Him.

These oaths were taken to emphasise the point that *"Without doubt, your Deity is One."* Allāh then goes on to describe His attributes. He says, *"He is the Lord of the heavens, the earth, whatever is between the two and He is the Lord of the points of the sun's rising."* The sun rises and sets at different points during the summer and the winter months; therefore the reference is made in the plural in this verse.

THE STARS ARE AN ADORNMENT AS WELL AS A MEANS OF PROTECTION FOR THE SKY

Allāh says, *"Verily, We decorated the sky of this world with the adornment of the stars; as a protection from every rebellious Satan."*

Before the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Satans (plural of Satan) used to frequently ascend to the skies, where they overheard the angels discussing future events. They used to then report these matters to fortune-tellers together with a hundred lies. When any of these events transpired as they had reported, people would begin to have faith in these fortune-tellers. However, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent as a Prophet , the Satans were barred from reaching the skies.

Therefore, Allāh says, *"They cannot eavesdrop on those (angels) of the upper heights and are pelted (with the stars) from every direction. (They are) Repelled and shall have an eternal punishment."* They can no longer eavesdrop as they did in the past.

"Except for the one who snatches something and a flaming spark pursues him." When some of these Satans are not deterred from attempting to eavesdrop, and manage to hear something, a flaming star is hurled at him. This star scorches him to cinders or makes him insane.

Allāh says about the stars in Surah Mulk that He has *"made them a means of pelting the Satans."* Surah Hijr and the above verses of Surah Sāffāt mention that every Satan who attempts to eavesdrop will be pelted by these stars.

People have objected to these verses by saying that the phenomenon of stars chasing the Satans cannot be witnessed, and can therefore not be proven. The following are some of the replies:

- The occurrence could be so distant that man cannot see it.
- These *"sparks"* could be products of the heat generated

by stars and not the stars themselves.

- The occurrence cannot be seen during the day because of the light of the sun.

It should also be understood that it is not necessary that every shooting star is a pellet against a Satan. There could well be other reasons as well for their occurrence.

فَاسْتَفْتِهِمْ أَهُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَم مَّنْ خَلَقْنَا ۚ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُم مِّن طِينٍ لَّازِبٍ ﴿١١﴾ بَلْ
عَجِبْتَ وَيَسْخَرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذَا ذُكِّرُوا لَا يَذْكُرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْا آيَةً يَسْتَسْخِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَقَالُوا
إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ أَوَآبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ
﴿١٧﴾ قُلْ نَعَمْ وَأَنتُمْ دَاخِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ فَإِذَا هُمْ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَقَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا
هَٰذَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ ﴿٢٠﴾ هَٰذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ الَّذِي كُنتُم بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

(11) Ask them whether their creation was more difficult than the other things We created. Verily, We created them from sticky clay. (12) You will be surprised as they mock. (13) When they are given advice, they do not take heed. (14) When they see a miracle, they begin to ridicule. (15) They say, "This is nothing but manifest magic." (16) "Will we be resurrected after we have died and become dust and bones?" (17) "Or will this happen to our early forefathers?" (18) Say, "Yes! And you will be disgraced." (19) There will be only a single shout, after which they will all instantly stand up to look. (20) They will say, "Alas! This is the Day of Reckoning." (21) "This is the Judgement Day, which you used to deny."

A WARNING FOR THOSE WHO RIDICULE MIRACLES AND THE ADVENT OF JUDGMENT DAY

"Ask them (those who refute Judgment day) *whether their creation was more difficult than the other things We created."* When a person realises that Allāh is Able to create gigantic and powerful creations, he will realise that Allāh is certainly Capable of resurrecting people.

"Verily, We created them from sticky clay." Allāh created man from something that had no form nor any structure. Such things should prompt man to contemplate Allāh's greatness.

"You will be surprised as they mock (because they refute Allāh's great powers). When they are given advice, they do not take heed." In fact, they are so obstinate that even *"When they see a miracle, they begin to ridicule. They say, 'This is nothing but manifest magic."*

When they have reached such a stage of insolence, there can be no hope for their guidance.

Allāh quotes them as saying, *"Will we be resurrected after we have died and become dust and bones? Or will this happen to our early forefathers?"* They deem it impossible that they will ever be resurrected.

Allāh replies, *"Say, 'Yes!* (Despite your sarcasm, you will be resurrected). *And you will be disgraced* (when the error of your ways will be exposed)."

Resurrection and Judgment day will not be difficult at all but it will come to pass with *"only a single shout, after which they will all instantly stand up to look."* People will rise from their graves when the trumpet will be blown for the first time. Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"Thereafter, it will be blown a second time, when they will all suddenly be standing, watching."* [*Surah 39, verse 68*]

When the disbelievers will rise from their graves, *"They will say, 'Alas! This is the Day of Reckoning."* Allāh will then tell them, *"This is the Judgement Day, which you used to deny."* They will then be subjected to punishment for their sins.

۞ ٱحْشُرُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ وَأَزْوَٰجَهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ (22) مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَٱهْدُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ
ٱلْجَحِيمِ (23) وَقِفُوهُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُم مَّسْـُٔولُونَ (24) مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنَاصَرُونَ (25) بَلْ هُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ
مُسْتَسْلِمُونَ (26) وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ (27) قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَأْتُونَنَا عَنِ
ٱلْيَمِينِ (28) قَالُوا۟ بَل لَّمْ تَكُونُوا۟ مُؤْمِنِينَ (29) وَمَا كَانَ لَنَا عَلَيْكُم مِّن سُلْطَٰنٍ ۖ بَلْ كُنتُمْ
قَوْمًا طَٰغِينَ (30) فَحَقَّ عَلَيْنَا قَوْلُ رَبِّنَآ ۖ إِنَّا لَذَآئِقُونَ (31) فَأَغْوَيْنَٰكُمْ إِنَّا كُنَّا غَٰوِينَ (32)
فَإِنَّهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ (33) إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ (34) إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوٓا۟
إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ (35) وَيَقُولُونَ أَئِنَّا لَتَارِكُوٓا۟ ءَالِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ
مَّجْنُونٍ (36)

(22) "Assemble the oppressors, their companions and whatever they worshipped..." (23) .... apart from Allāh, and lead them to the road of the Blaze." (24) "Halt them, for they will have to be questioned..." (25) "What is the matter with you that you do not help each other?" (26) On that day they will have surrendered. (27) They will turn to each other asking questions. (28) They (the followers) will say, "You people used to come to us with great might." (29) The leaders will reply, "But you people were never believers. (30) "We never had any authority over you, but you were a rebellious nation." (31) "The decree of our Lord has therefore been established against us. Undoubtedly, we shall all taste." (32) "We led you astray while we were ourselves astray." (33) Undoubtedly, they will all share in the punishment today. (34) Thus do We treat the criminals. (35) They were the ones who were proud when they were told, "There is none worthy of worship besides Allāh." (36) They used to say, "Should we leave our gods for an insane poet?"

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL BLAME EACH OTHER ON JUDGMENT DAY

Surah Sāffāt now discusses the condition of people on the Judgment day, after which Heaven and Hell are mentioned.

After the trumpet is sounded the second time, Allāh will command the angels saying, *"Assemble the oppressors (the disbelievers), their companions (i.e. their followers) and whatever they worshipped apart from Allāh, and lead them to the road of the Blaze. Halt them, for they will have to be questioned..."*

When they are halted, they will be asked, *"What is the matter with you that you do not help each other?"* In this world, they were allies to each other and they even promised to bear the burden of their fellow disbelievers on the Judgment day. Allāh quotes them in Surah Ankabūt as saying, *"Follow our way and we will bear the burden of your sins."* [*Surah 29, verse 12*]

However, no one will be able to assist another on the Day of Judgment and each one will hang his head down in disgrace. Allāh depicts this scene saying, *"On that day they will have surrendered (knowing that they will be punished)."*

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that people will be clinging onto those who called them towards something, even if the one being called was a single individual. They will never let go. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited the verse, *"Halt them, for they will have to be questioned. What is the matter with you that you do not help each other?"*

"They will turn to each other asking questions. They (the followers) will say, 'You people used to come to us with great might (i.e. exercising your influence and authority over us, you induced us to perpetrate disbelief, but cannot assist us today).' The leaders will reply, 'But you people were never believers." They will tell their followers that they (the leaders) merely told them to disbelieve, but it was them (the followers) who actually carried out the action of disbelieving.

The leaders will also tell their subordinates, *"We never had any authority over you..."* i.e. We never forced you to disbelieve, but merely spoke to you. The fact of the matter is that *"you were a rebellious nation."* You refused to accept the truth, so you disbelieved of your own will.

THE SINNERS ADMIT THAT THEY DESERVE TO BE PUNISHED

The disbelievers will then declare, *"The decree of our Lord has therefore been established against us. Undoubtedly, we shall all taste."* i.e. Allāh has decreed that all disbelievers and polytheists must enter Hell. We must therefore suffer the consequences of our deeds.

"We led you astray while we were ourselves astray." Both groups were disbelievers and must therefore enter Hell.

Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, they will all (leaders and followers) share in the punishment today."*

"Thus do We treat the criminals. They were the ones who were proud when they were told, 'There is none worthy of worship besides Allāh.'" They were too proud to

submit to the call of monotheism and worship Allāh.

"They used to say, 'Should we leave our gods for an insane poet?'" They rejected oneness of Allāh as well as the Prophet hood of the Holy Prophet of their time. For this reason, they will be punished as all disbelievers are in the Hereafter.

(37) He brought the truth and the messengers also confirmed him. (38) You will all definitely taste a grievous punishment. (39) You will be given retribution only for the deeds that you carried out. (40) Of course, the situation of Allāh's chosen bondsmen will be different. (41) For these people there will be a familiar provision... (42) ...of fruit. And they will be honourably treated... (43) ... In gardens of eternity... (44) ... Sitting on thrones, facing each other. (45) They will be presented with goblets filled with flowing wine. (46) (It will be) white and delicious for the drinkers. (47) It will neither produce headaches, nor will they be intoxicated by it. (48) With them, there shall be wide-eyed damsels, whose gazes are ever lowered. (49) As if they are well preserved eggs.

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL SUFFER IN HELL, WHILE THE BELIEVERS WILL ENJOY THE PLEASURES OF HEAVEN

Refuting the allegation of the disbelievers that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is (Allāh forbid!) *"an insane poet,"* Allāh says, *"He brought the truth and the* (previous) *messengers also confirmed him."* All the Prophets عليهم السلام before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم preached monotheism and they even foretold the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

However, the disbelievers still refused to believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and what he preached. Allāh warns them saying, *"You will all definitely taste a grievous punishment (because of this arrogant attitude.) You will be given retribution only for the deeds that you carried out."*

"Of course, the situation of Allāh's chosen bondsmen will be different." They will be granted salvation in the Hereafter on account of their Belief. Allāh says further, *"For these people there will be a familiar provision of fruit."* Allāh says in Surah Tūr, *"We shall grant them additional fruit and meat as they desire."* [*Surah 52, verse 22*]

"And they will be honourably treated in gardens of eternity (where they will be) *Sitting on thrones, facing each other. They will be presented with goblets filled with*

flowing wine." Just as Heaven will have rivers of milk, water and honey, it will also have rivers of pure wine, which will be served to them by attendants. Describing this wine, Allāh says, *"(It will be) white and delicious for the drinkers. It will neither produce headaches, nor will they be intoxicated by it."* Therefore, none can question the purity of this wine.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that the wine of Heaven will not have the odour present in the wines of this world, and it will not be detestable like worldly wine. The wine of Heaven will be extremely tasty and will not adversely affect the body either.

"With them, there shall be wide-eyed damsels, whose gazes are ever lowered." These women will be so pure, beautiful and attractive, that it will seem *"As if they are well preserved eggs."* This denotes that they will be protected against all evils and will be pure. The Arabs commonly described beautiful women as eggs.

Allāh says in Surah Rahmān that these damsels will be like rubies and pearls. Some commentators say that since extremely white women (resembling the colour of eggs) are disliked by many, the women of Heaven will vary according to the taste of people. Some will have the reddish shade of rubies, while others will have different complexions.

The verse also says that these women will cast their gazes downwards, which denotes that they will be modest and will have eyes only for their husbands. [Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه]

فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿50﴾ قَالَ قَآئِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ إِنِّي كَانَ لِي قَرِينٌ ﴿51﴾ يَقُولُ أَءِنَّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُصَدِّقِينَ ﴿52﴾ أَءِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَٰمًا أَءِنَّا لَمَدِينُونَ ﴿53﴾ قَالَ هَلْ أَنتُم مُّطَّلِعُونَ ﴿54﴾ فَٱطَّلَعَ فَرَءَاهُ فِي سَوَآءِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿55﴾ قَالَ تَٱللَّهِ إِن كِدتَّ لَتُرْدِينِ ﴿56﴾ وَلَوْلَا نِعْمَةُ رَبِّي لَكُنتُ مِنَ ٱلْمُحْضَرِينَ ﴿57﴾ أَفَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَيِّتِينَ ﴿58﴾ إِلَّا مَوْتَتَنَا ٱلْأُولَىٰ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿59﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿60﴾ لِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ ٱلْعَٰمِلُونَ ﴿61﴾

(50) They will face each other to pose questions to one other. (51) One of them will say, "I had a certain companion... (52) "...who used to say, 'Are you from those who confirm?"' (53) "'Will we really be given the retribution for our deeds when we die and become sand and bones?"' (54) He will ask, "Do you want to have a look?" (55) When he looks, he will see him in the midst of Hell. (56) He will say, "By Allāh! You almost destroyed me." (57) "If it were not for the bounty of my Lord, 1 would have certainly been from those brought forward." (58) 'Is not so that we shall not die again... (59) "...except for our first death, and we will not be punished?" (60) Undoubtedly, this is the greatest success. (61) Those who wish to act should act in a like manner.

A MATTER BETWEEN A PERSON OF HEAVEN AND A PERSON OF HELL

The people of Heaven will be enjoying the pleasures and food of Heaven as they sit together talking. As they discuss, one of them will tell the others, *'I had a certain companion* (who denied the advent of Judgment day). *He used to say, 'Are you from those who confirm* (the advent of Judgment day)? *Will we really be given the retribution for our deeds when we die and become sand and bones?'''* In this manner, the disbeliever used to deny Judgment day and ridicule the believer, whose efforts to convince him fell on deaf ears.

The person of Heaven will then say to his other companions of Heaven, *"Do you want to have a look at him?"* When he will take a look in Hell, he will see his worldly disbeliever companion *"in the midst of Hell."*

The believer will address the disbeliever, telling him *"By Allāh! You almost destroyed* me." i.e. You attempted to dissuade me from Islām and make me a disbeliever like you. *"If it were not for the bounty of my Lord, I would have certainly been from those brought forward (to suffer punishment with you)."*

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that it is possible that Allāh will grant the people of Heaven extremely good eyesight enabling them to see into Hell. From Heaven, they will also be able to converse with the inmates of Hell. It is also possible that the people of Heaven will be allowed to speak to the people of Hell from the barrier between the two, called A'rāf. Of course, these interpretations need not be given to convince a person living in today's times, who can see and converse with people on the opposite end of the globe.

Turning again to his companions in Heaven, the person will say, *"Is it not so that we shall not die again, except for our first death, and we will not be punished?"*

Allāh then says, *"Undoubtedly, this is the greatest success. Those who wish to act should act in a like manner."* There cannot be any aspiration greater than attaining admittance to Heaven and being saved from Hell.

أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ نُّزُلًا أَمْ شَجَرَةُ ٱلزَّقُّومِ ﴿62﴾ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَٰهَا فِتْنَةً لِّلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿63﴾ إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ
تَخْرُجُ فِىٓ أَصْلِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿64﴾ طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُۥ رُءُوسُ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ﴿65﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَءَاكِلُونَ مِنْهَا
فَمَالِـُٔونَ مِنْهَا ٱلْبُطُونَ ﴿66﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا لَشَوْبًا مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ﴿67﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرْجِعَهُمْ لَإِلَى
ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿68﴾ إِنَّهُمْ أَلْفَوْا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ ضَآلِّينَ ﴿69﴾ فَهُمْ عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِمْ يُهْرَعُونَ ﴿70﴾ وَلَقَدْ ضَلَّ
قَبْلَهُمْ أَكْثَرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿71﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِم مُّنذِرِينَ ﴿72﴾ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿73﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿74﴾

(62) Is this better hospitality, or the tree of Zaqqūm? (63) We have certainly

made it a test for the oppressors. (64) It is a tree that emerges from the depths of Hell. (65) Its fruit resembles the heads of snakes. (66) People will certainly eat from it and fill their bellies with it. (67) Thereafter they will be given a mixture of boiling water with it. (68) Thereafter their return will definitely be towards the boiling water. (69) They found their forefathers astray. (70) Then they rushed in their footsteps. (71) Most of the earlier people before them were astray. (72) We certainly sent warners among them. (73) So see the plight of those who were warned. (74) Of course, the situation of Allāh's chosen bondsmen will be different.

THE TREE OF ZAQQŪM WHICH THE PEOPLE OF HELL WILL EAT

After mentioning the bounties of Heaven, Allāh now starts to talk about the opposite side. Referring to the verse, *"For these people there will be a familiar provision of fruit"* and the associated bounties, Allāh asks *"Is this better hospitality, or the tree of Zaqqūm ?"*.

The tree of Zaqqūm is extremely bitter, pungent and hideous. Allāh says, *"It is a tree that emerges from the depths of Hell. Its fruit resembles the heads of snakes."*

Even though it will be so horrible, *"People will certainly eat from it and fill their bellies with it. Thereafter they will be given a mixture of boiling water with it."*

Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"Then, O you deviated falsifiers. You shall surely eat from the Zaqqūm tree and you shall fill your bellies with it. You shall drink boiling water upon it and you shall drink like thirsty camels. This is the hospitality they will receive on the Day of Reckoning."* [*Surah 56, verses 5 1-56*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "If even a drop from the Zaqqūm tree were to be dropped onto the earth, it would contaminate the food of all mankind. Imagine the condition of the person whose diet it will be?" [*Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.4 p.480*]

"Thereafter (after eating the Zaqqūm and drinking boiling water) *their return will definitely be towards the Blaze."* They will have no escape from misery.

Allāh says that Zaqqūm is a test for people because many people ridicule the reality of this tree. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that some disbelievers mocked it saying, "How can a tree exist in fire?" Allāh can create anything in any situation and maintain it there.

When Abu Jahl heard about Zaqqūm, he said, "According to us, Zaqqūm means dates and butter. Even there we will enjoy them." He fabricated this definition because Zaqqūm never meant dates and butter in the Arabic language.

THE PEOPLE OF HELL FOLLOWED THEIR FOREFATHERS

"They found their forefathers astray. Then they rushed in their footsteps." Without verifying the reality of matters, these people rushed to follow their forefathers into Hell.

"Most of the earlier people before them were astray. (because of which) *We certainly sent warners* [Prophets عليهم السلام] *among them."* These Prophets عليهم السلام warned the people that disbelief will lead them to Hell. However, most of them

refused to listen. They were therefore destroyed in this world and in the Hereafter. Referring to their destruction, Allāh says, *"So see the plight of those who were warned."*

"Of course, the situation of Allāh's chosen bondsmen will be different."

(75) Indeed Nūh called to Us. How excellently do We respond to the plea for help? (76) We rescued him and his family from great distress. (77) We made his progeny the only survivors. (78) And, in his favour, We left for those to come after... (79) Peace be to Nūh in the universe. (80) Thus do We reward those who do good. (81) He was certainly from Our believing slaves. (82)Thereafter, We drowned the rest.

THE SUPPLICATION OF SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام AND THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS NATION

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام preached to his people for 950 years. He pleaded with them to forsake idolatry and to accept Allāh as their Only Deity. Despite his tireless efforts, only a few people followed him. Despondent, he finally prayed to Allāh saying, *"Do not leave a single household of the disbelievers on earth."* [*Surah Nūh (71), verse 26*]

Allāh commanded him to build an ark, after which he took on board all the believers and a pair of each animal species. Allāh then sent torrents of water from the sky and from the earth, flooding the entire surface of the earth. While those on the ark were rescued, all the disbelievers perished, including Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام son.

Referring to this epic, Allāh says, *"Indeed Nūh called to Us. How excellently do We respond to the plea for help? We rescued him and his family from great distress (i.e. the floods). We made his progeny the only survivors. And, in his favour, We left (a fond remembrance) for those to come after (who will pray): Peace be to Nūh in the universe',"*

Allāh conferred the following favours on Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام:

1. His family was rescued from the floods.
2. His progeny remains on earth until this day.
3. After his demise, people still think fondly of him. All the Prophets عليهم السلام after him, as well as their followers pray that peace is granted to him, meaning that he should be

peaceful wherever he is.

"Thus do We reward those who do good." This verse refers to those people who carry out acts of virtue solely for Allāh's pleasure i.e. the sincere people.

"He was certainly from Our believing slaves." No good deed is accepted by Allāh without Belief. The two verses emphasise the importance of Belief and good deeds, which were also necessary for a Prophet to gain proximity to Allāh.

After Allāh rescued Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and his family, Allāh *"drowned the rest."*

DID THE FLOODS OF SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام COVER THE ENTIRE EARTH?

It is common knowledge that the people who lived after Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام were all from his progeny, because of which he is referred to as the second Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. This is also indicated by the verse, *"We made his progeny the only survivors."*

Sayyidina Samura رضى الله عنه reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained the verse *"We made his progeny the only survivors,"* he mentioned that Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام had three sons, viz. Hām Sām and Yāfith. He also narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that Sām was the forefather of the Arabs, Hām was the forefather of the Africans, while Yāfith was the forefather of the Romans. [*Tirmidhi*]

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Musayyib رحمة الله عليه that Sām was the forefather of the Arabs, the Persians and Romans, Hām was the forebear of the Africans, while the progeny of Yāfith were the Turks, the Ya'jūj, Ma'jūj and the nations around them.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that all the believers who boarded the ark passed away after a while without leaving any successors. The only survivors therefore, were Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, his three sons and their wives. However, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" does not quote a reference for this narration.

On the other hand, many commentators are of the opinion that the flood did not spread beyond the boundaries of the region to which Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام was sent as a Prophet. They say that the flood destroyed only the disbelievers who lived in Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام region. They say that he could not have been sent as a Prophet to the entire human race because this privilege is reserved for Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. Therefore, the progenies of the people living in other regions could well have prospered into the people we see today.

They add that the verse *"We made his progeny the only survivors"* means that Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام progeny were the only survivors from those who boarded the ark. Of these people, only his progeny lived on. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v.23 p.98*]

(83) Verily, from his followers was Ibrahīm. (84) (Recall the time) when he came to his Lord with a sound heart. (85) And when he said to his people and his father, "What do you worship?" (86) "Do you desire concocted deities instead of Allāh?" (87) "What is your opinion about the Lord of the universe?" (88) He glanced once at the stars. (89) Then he said, "I feel ill." (90) So they turned their backs on him and left. (91) He hurried to their gods and said, "Do you not eat?" (92) "What ails you that you do not speak?" (93) He then turned to them, striking them with force. (94) The people came to him in haste. (95) He said, "Do you worship what you carve?" (96) "Whereas Allāh has created you and what you do?" (97) They said, "Construct a building for him and cast him into a blazing fire." (98) They devised a plot against him, but We made them the ones to look down.

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام PREACHES ONENESS OF ALLAH TO HIS PEOPLE, BREAKS THE IDOLS AND IS CAST INTO A FIRE

"Verily, from his [Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام] *followers was Ibrahīm."* Some commentators have mentioned that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام is said to be a follower of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام because the Shari'ahs of the two Prophets عليهم السلام were very much the same. Other commentators say that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام followed Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام in the effort that he exerted for the propagation of his religion.

"(Recall the time) when he came to his Lord with a sound heart." The Arabic word 'salīm' (translated above as *"sound")* refers to a heart that is ever aware of Allāh's presence and which is imbued with correct beliefs. It has sincere motives and is free from evil traits like pride, jealousy, etc.

Allāh then quotes a discussion that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام had with his people and his father. Allāh says that the incident is also worth remembering *"When he said to his people and his father, 'What do you worship?'" They replied, "We worship idols and we are devoted to them."* Thereupon Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, *"Do you desire concocted deities instead of Allāh? What is your opinion about the Lord of the universe?"* i.e. Do you not worship Allāh at all, or do you worship Allāh together with your idols? "Ruhul Ma'āni" has interpreted the statement to mean: *"Do you people think that Allāh will not punish you for this polytheism?"*

Like many other polytheist nations, the people of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام also held a fair. On one occasion, they presented food to their idols and left for the fair. When they asked Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to accompany them, *"He glanced once at the stars. Then he said, 'I feel ill.'"* The people believed in the strange effects that stars had on people, so they did not question his motive to remain behind. Consequently, *"they turned their backs on him and left."*

When they left, he put his plan into action and *"hurried to their gods and* (seeing all the food still intact before them) *said, 'Do you not eat?'"* When they did not reply, he said, *"What ails you that you do not speak?"*

"He then turned to them, striking them with force." Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام smashed the idols to pieces. The Arabic word "bil yamīn" (translated above as *"with force "*) may also be translated as *"with the right hand,"* meaning that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام held the axe in his right hand.

The rest of the incident has been mentioned in Surah Anbiya in the following words:

"So he reduced them (the idols) to fragments, except for the largest of them so that they may have recourse towards him. They exclaimed, 'Who has done this to our gods? He is certainly from the oppressors!' They said, 'We have heard a youth make mention of them. He is called Ibrahīm.' They said, 'Bring him before the people so that they be witnesses.' They asked, 'Is it you that did this to our gods, O Ibrahīm?' He replied, 'But this large one has done it. Ask them if they can talk.' They all searched their souls and said, 'You are oppressors indeed.' They then lowered their heads saying, 'You know very well that these cannot speak.' He said, 'Do you then worship besides Allāh such things that can neither profit you, nor harm you? Shame on you and on those that you worship besides Allāh! Do you not understand?'" [*Surah Anbiya (21), verses 58 to 67*]

Surah Sāffāt relates the story briefly, when it says, *"The people came to him in haste. He said, 'Do you worship what you carve? Whereas Allāh has created you and what you do?'"*

Unable to reply to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, the people said, *"Construct a building for him and cast him into a blazing fire."* Consequently, they erected four walls and stoked a raging fire, which could not even be approached. They finally cast him in it using a catapult. However, Allāh says, *"They devised a plot against him, but We made them the ones to look down."* As they cast him in the fire, Allāh commanded the fire saying, *"O fire! Be cool and peaceful for Ibrahīm."* He managed to live peacefully in the fire without the slightest injury.

The details of this incident have been given in Surah Anbiya [*Surah 21, verses 51-70*], where the necessary notes were added with regard to the statement, *"I feel ill."*

As mentioned earlier, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام merely looked to the stars because the people believed that the stars have an effect on people, because of which they would not question Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام further. The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that the knowledge of astrology is despised by the Shari'ah. The stars cannot affect the conditions of people on earth, and cannot foretell good and bad fortune. Acquiring this knowledge will weaken a person's reliance in Allāh and also leads to shirk (*polytheism*). It is also a waste of valuable

time, which could be utilised more profitably.

وَقَالَ إِنِّي ذَاهِبٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ (99) رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (100) فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ
بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ (101) فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي
أَذْبَحُكَ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ ۚ قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ ۖ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ
الصَّابِرِينَ (102) فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ (103) وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَن يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ (104) قَدْ
صَدَّقْتَ الرُّؤْيَا ۚ إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ (105) إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ الْبَلَاءُ الْمُبِينُ (106)
وَفَدَيْنَاهُ بِذِبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ (107) وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ (108) سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ (109)
كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ (110) إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (111) وَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِإِسْحَاقَ نَبِيًّا
مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (112) وَبَارَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ إِسْحَاقَ ۚ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا مُحْسِنٌ وَظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ
مُبِينٌ (113)

(99) Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, "I am going to my Lord, Who will soon guide me." (100) "O my Lord! Grant me a son from among the pious." (101) So We conveyed to him the good news of a tolerant son. (102) When the child reached the age where he could run about, Ibrahīm عليه السلام said to him, "O my beloved son! Verily, I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you. So consider your opinion." He replied, "O my beloved father.' Do as you have been commanded. If Allāh wills, you will soon find me to be among the patient ones." (103) So when the two submitted and Ibrahīm turned his son on his side... 104.... We called to him saying, "O Ibrahīm!" (105) "You have certainly brought the dream to a realisation. Thus do We reward those who do good." (106) This is definitely a decisive test. (107) And We compensated him with a grand sacrifice. (108) And, in his favour, We left for those to come after... (109) 'Peace be on Ibrahīm in the universe. (110) Thus do We reward those who do good. (111) He was certainly from Our believing slaves. (112) We gave him the good news of Is'hāq, a Prophet from the pious. (113) We blessed him and Is'hāq. From the progeny of the two, there was the one who did good, as well as the open oppressor of his soul.

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام MIGRATES, AND OBEYS ALLĀH'S COMMAND TO SLAUGHTER HIS SON

When the people of his homeland near Babylon refused to accept his message of Oneness of Allāh, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام announced his migration saying, *'I am going to my Lord, Who will soon guide me."* He then left with Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام for Palestine, where they settled.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام also took his wife Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام with him. Later he married her gifted slave woman Sayyidah Hājir عليها السلام the time

came when Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made the following supplication to Allāh. He said, *"O my Lord! Grant me a son from among the pious."*

Allāh accepted his Supplication. Allāh says, *"So We conveyed to him the good news of a tolerant son."* Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه says that all the commentators are unanimous that the son referred to in this verse is Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام, born to Sayyidah Hājir عليها السلام. Allāh commanded Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to leave Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام and his mother in Makkah, which was then a bare desert, with no inhabitants. It was then that the well of Zamzam originated, after which the Jurhum tribe arrived there from Yemen (this incident has been discussed in the commentary of verse 158 of Surah Baqarah).

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام often visited his wife and child in Makkah. It once occurred that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام saw himself in a dream slaughtering his son Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. The dreams of the Holy Prophet عليه السلام are always true and denote a command from Allāh. He therefore addressed his son saying, *"O my beloved son! Verily, I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you. So consider your opinion."* Without hesitating, Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام said, *"O my beloved father! Do as you have been commanded. If Allāh wills, you will soon find me to be among the patient ones."*

Subsequently, father and son proceeded to a place called Mina (which is about three miles from Makkah). When they reached Mina, Satan attempted to mislead Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام noticed this, he exclaimed *"Allāhu Akbar!"* and pelted Satan using seven pebbles. This caused Satan to sink into the ground, and the father and son proceeded further. When the ground released Satan, he again attempted the same ploy. For the second time, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام pelted him, causing him to sink into the ground. When he again emerged from the ground, Satan made a third attempt, but Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام dismissed him with another seven pebbles, while exclaiming, *"Allāhu Akbar!"*

Eventually, they reached the place of sacrifice. Allāh says, *"So when the two submitted and Ibrahīm turned his son on his side, We called to him saying, 'O Ibrahīm! You have certainly brought the dream to a realisation. Thus do We reward those who do good."*

Allāh further stated, *"This is definitely a decisive test. And We compensated him with a grand sacrifice."* When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام tried to slaughter his son, the knife would not cut. It is commonly believed that Allāh covered Sayyidina Isma'īl's عليه السلام throat with copper, so that the knife could not cut it.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that Allāh replaced Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام with a ram from Heaven. Another narration states that Jibr'īl عليه السلام brought the ram, which Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام slaughtered instead.

"And, in his favour, We left (a fond remembrance) for those to come after (who will pray): 'Peace be on Ibrahīm in the universe'. Thus do We reward those who do good." Therefore, every nation after Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام held him in high esteem. The Ummah of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم recite, *"Alayhis Salām"* ("Peace be on him") every time when Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام name is taken.

this are found in the books of Islāmic jurisprudence.

No person will be allowed to give the equivalent of an animal in charity because the object of the sacrifice is to give blood, as Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام did.

Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه reports that the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the sacrifice. He said that it was the practice of their father, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. When they asked about the reward, he said that they will receive a reward for every hair on the animal's body. They then asked about woollen animals, to which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that they will receive a reward for every fibre of wool on the animal. [*Ahmad and Ibn Majah*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that no action of a person is more beloved to Allāh on the day of Nahr (10th of Dhul Hijjah) than the spilling of the sacrificial animal's blood. He also added, "The animal will appear on the Day of Judgment with its horns, hide and hooves (to be weighed for reward)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said that the sacrifice is accepted even before the first drop of blood reaches the ground. He therefore urged Muslims to offer the sacrifice with pleasure. [*Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.104*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها to stand by as her animal was being sacrificed because her sins would be forgiven because of the sacrifice. When she asked whether this virtue was reserved for his family, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "For us and for all the Muslims." [*Ibid*]

THE NEWS OF THE BIRTH OF SAYYIDINA IS'HĀQ عليه السلام

Allāh says further, "*We gave him* [Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام] *the good news of Is'hāq, a Prophet from the pious. We blessed him and Is'hāq.*"

Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام was one of the renowned sons of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, with whom Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام built the Ka'ba, and who was the forefather of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The other famous son was Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام, whose son was Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام. Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام was also called Isra'īl. He had twelve sons, from whom the twelve tribes of the Bani Isra'īl originated. His progeny reproduced into large numbers and thousands of Prophets عليهم السلام were born of them.

"From the progeny of the two, there was the one who did good, as well as the open oppressor of his soul." This verse proves that being in the lineage of a Prophet does not necessarily mean that a person is a chosen servant of Allāh. Such a person can also be a disbeliever.

WHICH SON OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام WAS CALLED "DHABĪH" ("THE ONE WHO WAS SACRIFICED")

The Ahlul Kitāb (*people of the book*) claim that Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام was the 'Dhabīh' (the one who was sacrificed), and this view is supported by a few Muslims as well. However, the vast majority and the authoritative Scholars say

that the 'Dhabīh' was Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام.

The proof for this is that Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام is referred to in the verse, *"So We conveyed to him the good news of a tolerant son."* This verse is immediately followed by the verse, *"When the child reached the age where he could run about, Ibrahīm* عليه السلام *said to him, 'O my beloved son! Verily, I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you..."* This denotes that the same son is being referred to in the second verse as well, viz. Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام.

It is only thereafter, that Allāh says, *"We gave him* [Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام] *the good news of Is'hāq, a Prophet from the pious. We blessed him and Is'hāq."*

Another, more weighty proof, is the verse of Surah Hūd, where Allāh says that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and his wife Sayyidah Sarah رضى الله عنها were given *"the glad tidings of Is'hāq, and Ya'qūb after Is'hāq."* This told Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام that Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام will be born from Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام. He therefore knew that Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام would live on to become a father. It is also a fact that the incident of slaughtering took place when the son was still a child, as indicated by the words, *"When the child reached the age where he could run about..."* The words, "Yā Bunayya" (translated above as *"O my beloved son!"*) also suggest that the boy was young because the word is normally used to address a small boy

It would therefore be futile to test Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام by commanding him to slaughter a son whom he knew would live to become an adult, and who would not be killed by the slaughtering.

وَلَقَدْ مَنَنَّا عَلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿114﴾ وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُمَا وَقَوْمَهُمَا مِنَ ٱلْكَرْبِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿115﴾ وَنَصَرْنَٰهُمْ فَكَانُوا۟ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿116﴾ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُمَا ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ٱلْمُسْتَبِينَ ﴿117﴾ وَهَدَيْنَٰهُمَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿118﴾ وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿119﴾ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿120﴾ إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿121﴾ إِنَّهُمَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿122﴾

(114) Undoubtedly We favoured Mūsa and Hārūn. (115) We rescued the two of them and their people from great distress. (116) We assisted them and they became victorious. (117) We gave the two of them a Book that clearly elucidates matters. (118) And We guided the two of them to the straight path. (119) And, in their favour, We left for those to come after... (120) 'Peace be on Mūsa and Hārūn in the universe. (121) Thus do We reward those who do good. (122) They were certainly from Our believing slaves.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA AND HĀRŪN عليهما السلام

Allāh introduces the incident of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام by saying, *"Undoubtedly We favoured Mūsa and Hārūn."* Among the greatest favours that

Allāh bestowed on them was that He made them the Holy Prophet عليه السلام. Another favour was that Allāh *"rescued the two of them and their people from great distress. We assisted them and they became victorious."* The Bani Isra'īl lived under constant tyranny and oppression. Not only did Fir'aun (*pharaoh*) enslave them, but he even killed their sons. Allāh rescued them from this oppression and allowed them to leave Egypt with Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Allāh also destroyed Fir'aun (*pharaoh*) and his armies.

In addition to this, Allāh *'gave the two of them a Book* (the Torah) *that clearly elucidates matters* (i.e. the laws of their religion). *And We guided the two of them to the straight path* (so that they could lead the Bani Isra'īl)."

"And, in their favour, We left (a fond remembrance) for those to come after (who pray for them saying): 'Peace be on Mūsa and Hārūn in the universe.' Thus do We reward those who do good. They were certainly from Our believing slaves." Therefore, every nation after Sayyidina Mūsa and Hārūn عليهما السلام held them in high esteem. The Ummah of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم recite, "Alay his Salaam" ("Peace be on him") every time their names are taken.

وَإِنَّ إِلْيَاسَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿123﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿124﴾ أَتَدْعُونَ بَعْلًا وَتَذَرُونَ أَحْسَنَ ٱلْخَٰلِقِينَ ﴿125﴾ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ وَرَبَّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿126﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ ﴿127﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿128﴾ وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿129﴾ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰٓ إِلْ يَاسِينَ ﴿130﴾ إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿131﴾ إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿132﴾

(123) Indeed Ilyās was from the messengers. (124) When he said to his people, "Do you not fear?" (125) "Do you worship Ba'l and leave out the Best of all creators?" (126) "Allāh is your Lord and the Lord of your predecessors." (127) They falsified him, so they will certainly be brought forward (for punishment). (128) Of course, the situation of Allāh's chosen bondsmen will be different. (129) And, in his favour, We left for those to come after... (130) 'Peace be upon Ilyāsīn in the universes. (131) Thus do We reward those who do good. (132) He was certainly from Our believing slaves.

SAYYIDINA ILYĀS عليه السلام PREACHES TO HIS PEOPLE

Commentators mention that Sayyidina Ilyās عليه السلام was from the progeny of Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام. The people to whom he was sent to preach were idol worshippers, their focal idol being one called "Ba'l." "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that this idol was made of gold. It was twenty cubits in height and had four faces. Satan used to enter the idol and address the worshippers and attendants from within, thereby deepening their faith.

Sayyidina Ilyās عليه السلام told them, *"Do you not fear* (Allāh). *Do you worship*

Ba'l and leave out the Best of all creators? Allāh is your Lord and the Lord of your predecessors." In this manner, he urged them to worship Allāh only. He impressed upon their minds that Allāh is the best of all those who create forms so that they are never impressed by the idols they carve. However, *"They falsified him, so they will certainly be brought forward (for punishment)."*

Allāh adds, *"Of course, the situation of Allāh's chosen bondsmen will be different."* This verse proves that there were believers among Sayyidina Ilyās's عليه السلام nation.

"And, in his favour, We left (a fond remembrance) for those to come after (who pray for them saying): 'Peace be upon Ilyāsīn in the universe'. Thus do We reward those who do good. He was certainly from Our believing slaves." The word Ilyāsīn also refers to Sayyidina Ilyās عليه السلام. It is common in Arabic to add additional letters to a name, just like Mount Sinā (Sinai) is also called Mount Sinīn.

(133) Indeed Lūt was from the messengers. (134) When We rescued him and all the members of his family... (135).... except an old lady among those left behind. (136) Thereafter, We annihilated the rest. (137) You pass by them in the mornings... (138) ... and at nights. Do you not understand?

THE DESTRUCTION OF SAYYIDINA LŪT'S عليه السلام NATION

The nation of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام were disbelievers and also perpetrated the vile act of homosexuality. Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام exerted himself to convince them of the error of their ways and to believe in oneness of Allāh. However, they refused to heed his advice. They even threatened to banish him from the town if he did not desist from preaching.

Eventually, Allāh commanded him to leave the town at night with his family, who were all believers, except his old wife who did not believe in him. Consequently, he left with them and Allāh overturned their town and rained stones on them. The incident has been mentioned in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verse 80-84*] Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 77-83*], Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verses 58-77*], Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 160-175*] and Surah Ankabūt [*Surah 29, verses 31-35*].

A LESSON FOR THE PEOPLE OF MAKKAH

Addressing the people of Makkah, Allāh says, *"You pass by them* [the ruins of the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام] *in the mornings and at nights. Do you not understand?"* The Quraysh of Makkah often passed by these ruins on their way to Shām (*Syria*) for trade. Commentators mention that they usually passed these ruins during the morning when they travelled to Shām, and usually passed them

at night on their return journey. Allāh urges them to take a lesson from these ruins and to stop opposing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Islām.

(139) Yunus was certainly from the messengers. (140) When he made an exit to the crowded ship. (141) They drew lots and he was of the losers. (142) Then a fish swallowed him, and he was blameworthy. (143) If he were not from those who glorify Allāh... (144) ... he would have remained in its belly until the day people are resurrected. (145) We cast him on a barren shore, and he was ill. (146) We then caused a creeper to grow over him. (147) Then We sent him to a nation of a hundred thousand or more. (148) They believed and We allowed them to enjoy themselves for a while.

SAYYIDINA YUNUS عليه السلام LEAVES HIS PEOPLE AND IS SWALLOWED BY A LARGE FISH

Commentators write that Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام preached to his people for a very long time, but received no response from them. Eventually, he told them that they will be punished after three days. He waited for the duration, but when he noticed nothing happening on the third day, he left them, fearing that he may be wrong. After he left, the people noticed the signs of punishment approaching and immediately repented to Allāh and became believers. As a result of this, Allāh forgave them and removed the punishment. It is with reference to this that Allāh says in Surah Yunus, *"There was no nation who believed, then their belief profited them, except the nation of Yunus عليه السلام. When they believed, We averted from them a punishment of disgrace in this worldly life and We granted them enjoyment for a while."* [*Surah 10, verse 98*]

In the meantime, Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام left for the coast and boarded a ship. When the ship was in danger of sinking because of bad weather, the sailors exclaimed that there was slave on board who had fled from his master. According to another narration, Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام himself noticed that other ships were sailing, while his ship remained stationary. When he asked the people for the reason, they said that it appears as if a runaway slave was on board. They added that the ship would not move until the runaway slave was cast overboard.

Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام told them that he was the runaway slave (because he left the town without Allāh's permission), and should be thrown overboard.

When the people argued that they could not throw Allāh's Prophet overboard, Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام insisted that they draw lots to determine who was to be thrown overboard. When they thrice drew lots to determine who the person was, the name of Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام emerged each time.

The method used to draw lots was that every person cast an arrow in the sea. The person whose arrow surfaced would be the loser. When this occurred to Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام each time, even the people realised that he was to be thrown overboard. Consequently, Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام threw himself overboard. Allāh refers to this incident when He says, *"They drew lots and he was of the losers."* [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

As he leapt into the sea, a large fish swallowed him without chewing him and he reached its belly unharmed. He was now enveloped in the three darknesses: that of the night, the ocean and the fish. However, he engaged in Allāh's glorification, as quoted in Surah Anbiya, where Allāh says, *".... he supplicated in the darkness saying, 'There is no deity besides You. You are Pure. I have certainly been from among the oppressors."* [*Surah 21, verse 87*]

Because of his constant glorification of Allāh and engagement in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*, Allāh protected him in the fish and finally rescued him. Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"So We responded to his call and rescued him from distress. Thus do We reward the believers."* [*Surah 21, verse 88*]

In reference to this, Allāh says, *"If he were not from those who glorify Allāh, he would have remained in its belly until the day people are resurrected."*

Allāh then commanded the fish to spit Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام out at the shore, which it did. Allāh says, *"We cast him on a barren shore, and he was ill."* After spending time in the belly of the fish, Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام was extremely ill. Certain commentators say that he suffered extreme exhaustion.

He was in need of food, rest and shelter. Allāh caused a creeper to grow over him to shade him and a goat used to come to him each day, from which he drank milk. Allāh says, *"We then caused a creeper to grow over him."* In a miraculous way, Allāh made the creeper such that it provided ample shade for Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام, by growing upright without any support. Other commentators say that the creeper grew on a dry tree which stood there.

THE NUMBER OF SAYYIDINA YUNUS'S عليه السلام FOLLOWERS

Allāh sent Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام as a Prophet to the people of Nineveh, close to Mawsil. With regard to these people, Allāh says, *"Then We sent him to a nation of a hundred thousand or more. They* (repented,) *believed and We allowed them to enjoy themselves for a while."* Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام returned to his people after the brief separation.

"hundred thousand or more" The following interpretations have been tendered with regard to the apparent uncertainty in this verse:

- The Arabic word 'aw' (translated above as "or") may be translated as "but, in fact" i.e. the people numbered a hundred thousand, but, in fact were more."

- The Arabic word 'aw' (translated above as "or") may be translated as "and" i.e. they were a hundred thousand and even more.
- The verse speaks about man's estimation of their number, i.e. if anyone has to estimate, he would say that they were a *"hundred thousand or more."* [*Qurtubi*]
- If the figure was rounded off, it would stand at a hundred thousand. However, without rounding it off, it would be more. [*"Bayānul Qur'ān"*]

NOTE: Although a nation is not forgiven once Allāh's punishment arrives, the nation of Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام was an exception. This has been discussed in detail in the commentary of verse 98 of Surah Yunus (*Surah 10*).

فَٱسْتَفْتِهِمْ أَلِرَبِّكَ ٱلْبَنَاتُ وَلَهُمُ ٱلْبَنُونَ (149) أَمْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ إِنَٰثًا وَهُمْ
شَٰهِدُونَ (150) أَلَآ إِنَّهُم مِّنْ إِفْكِهِمْ لَيَقُولُونَ (151) وَلَدَ ٱللَّهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ (152)
أَصْطَفَى ٱلْبَنَاتِ عَلَى ٱلْبَنِينَ (153) مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ (154) أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ (155) أَمْ لَكُمْ
سُلْطَٰنٌ مُّبِينٌ (156) فَأْتُوا۟ بِكِتَٰبِكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ (157) وَجَعَلُوا۟ بَيْنَهُۥ وَبَيْنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ نَسَبًا ۚ
وَلَقَدْ عَلِمَتِ ٱلْجِنَّةُ إِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ (158) سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ (159) إِلَّا عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ
ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ (160)

(149) Ask them, "Should your Lord have daughters, while you have sons?" (150) "Or have We created the angels as females in their presence?" (151) Behold! Because of their concocted beliefs, they will certainly say... (152) "Allāh has children." Undoubtedly, they are liars! (153) Has Allāh chosen daughters instead of sons? (154) What ails you people? How do you decide? (155) Do you not take heed? (156) Or have you some clear proof? (157) So bring your Book if you are truthful. (158) They have contrived a kinship between Allāh and the Jinn. The Jinn already know that they will be among those brought forward (for punishment). (159) Allāh is Pure of all they ascribe. (160) Of course, the condition of Allāh's sincere bondsmen will be different.

REBUKING THE POLYTHEISTS WHO ASCRIBE CHILDREN TO ALLĀH

Besides beguiling people into worshipping idols, Satan made people believe that the angels are Allāh's daughters and the Jinn are also related to Allāh. However, the fact is clear that Allāh *"begets not, nor is He begotten."* Allāh says in Surah Maryam, *"It is not befitting of Rahmān (the Compassianate) to take children."* [*Surah 19, verse 92*]

Allāh rebukes the polytheists for believing that the angels are His daughters. They have no proof to believe this because they were not present when Allāh created the angels. Allāh asks, *"Or have We created the angels as females in their presence?"*

Besides attributing children to Allāh, they chose to call the angels Allāh's daughters instead of Allāh's sons, whereas they regard daughters to be inferior to sons.

Allāh asks them, *"What ails you people? How do you decide?"* They have fabricated this belief without any proof whatsoever.

When the polytheists claimed that the angels are Allāh's daughters, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه asked them who were the mothers of these angels. The polytheists replied that their mothers were the daughters of the Jinn leaders. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v.23 p.151*]

In this way, they even related the Jinn to Allāh. Allāh says, *"They have contrived a kinship between Allāh and the Jinn. The Jinn already know that they will be among those brought forward (for punishment)."* How can people who will be punished by Allāh be His relatives?

Allāh declares, *"Allāh is Pure of all they ascribe. Of course, the condition of Allāh's sincere bondsmen will be different."* They will be rescued from Hell and be admitted to Heaven.

(161) Surely you and whatever you worship... (162) cannot avert anyone from Allāh... (163) ...except for him who is destined to enter the Blaze. (164) The position of each of us is known. (165) Indeed, we are standing in rows. (166) Indeed, we are glorifying Allāh. (167) It is a fact that these people say... (168) "If only we had advice from the past... (169) ... we would then surely have been Allāh 's sincere bondsmen." (170) They disbelieve it (the Qur'ān), and will soon come to know.

SOME QUALITIES OF THE ANGELS

Allāh addresses the polytheists saying, *"Surely you and whatever you worship cannot avert anyone from Allāh..."* Despite all their efforts, they cannot mislead anyone. However, they may well be successful with the person *"who is destined to enter the Blaze."*

Just as Allāh proved above that the Jinn are helpless before Him, Allāh now

discusses the position of the angels, who are also helpless against Allāh. Just as the Jinn admitted their helplessness, Allāh quotes the angels as saying, *"The position of each of us is known* (to Allāh). *Indeed, we are standing in rows* (to worship Allāh). *Indeed, we are glorifying Allāh." (It* is strange that the angels worship Allāh, yet those who profess to worship the angels as Allāh's daughters, do not worship Allāh).

Before the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Arabs used to say, *"If only we had advice* (a divine scripture) *from the past, we would then surely have been Allāh 's sincere bondsmen."*

Allāh mentions in Surah Fātir, *"They take solemn oaths by Allāh that if a warner has to come to them, they would become more rightly guided than any nation. But when the warner came to them, it only increased them in animosity."* [*Surah 35, verse* 42]

However, they failed to keep to their word, and *"They disbelieve it (the Qur'ān), and will soon come to know."*

(171) Our decree has been issued concerning Our messenger slaves. (172) Verily, they will be assisted. (173) And surely Our army shall be victorious. (174) So ignore them for a while. (175) Keep watching them, for they shall soon see. (176) Do they seek to hasten Our punishment? (177) So when it descends on their plain, then the morning of those warned will be evil indeed. (178) Ignore them for a while. (179) Keep watching, for they shall soon see.

THE MESSENGERS WILL BE ASSISTED

"Our decree has been issued concerning Our messenger slaves [i.e. the Prophets عليهم السلام*]. The decree is that] Verily, they will be assisted. And surely Our army shall be victorious."*

Allāh declares in Surah Mumin, *"We shall definitely assist Our messengers and those who believe in this worldly life, as well as on the Day witnesses will stand."* [*Surah 40, verse 51*]

A verse of Surah Mujādala reads, *"Allāh has ordained, 'Verily My messengers and I shall certainly be victorious.' Indeed, Allāh is Powerful, Mighty."* [*Surah 58, verse* 21]

Allāh has sent many Prophets عليهم السلام to this world. Some of them had no followers at all, while others had very few followers [*Muslim v.1 p.117*]. These followers assisted the Prophets عليهم السلام to fight the disbelievers. In every era, the

beliefs of the believers were always superior to those of the disbelievers. Even when people refused to believe, the Prophets عليهم السلام were always victors because the disbelievers were destroyed by Allāh' s punishment.

When the Prophets عليهم السلام fought battles against the disbelievers, the Prophets عليهم السلام were always victorious in the end, even though they may have suffered temporary defeat on certain occasions. It rarely occurred that people killed a Prophet without contest, like the Bani Isrā'īl managed to do. No Prophet عليه السلام was ever killed when he fought with an army of his own.

It should be borne in mind that such incidents where Prophet عليه السلام were killed are very rare, and they are not without some underlying reason known to Allāh. It should also be remembered that the above verses of Surah Sāffāt, Mu'min and Mujādala do not mention that the Prophets عليهم السلام will be victorious on every occasion. They merely state that the Prophets عليهم السلام will be victorious in the end.

Although the Muslims suffered a temporary defeat at Uhud, they won the battle of Ahzāb thereafter, then conquered Makkah, after which the people of Tā'if also accepted Islām. It was not long afterwards that the Roman and Persian empires also fell to the Muslims. The defeat at Uhud was the result of an error on that part of the Muslims, as Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Until (the time came when) you lost courage, disputed with regard to the order and disobeyed after you were shown what you liked. Some of you sought the world while some of you sought the Hereafter. Then Allāh deflected you from them to test you."* [*Surah 3, verse 152*]

The Muslims were granted victory at Badr, thereby learning how to behave in such a situation. They then had to learn practically how to handle defeat, which was taught to them at Uhud. It was also on this occasion that they learnt the importance of adhering strictly to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم commands.

THE NECESSITY FOR SINCERITY AND PIETY

Allāh continued to allow the Muslims to be victorious as long as they maintained sincerity and piety. When they began to lose these, they began to fall prey to the disbelievers. As they began to cheat, lie, love the world and commit sins, the disbelievers started gaining the upper hand. They forgot the lesson of Uhud and wandered away from the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It was then that they started to lose the territories Allāh gave their forefathers.

Allāh says, *"Do not lose courage and do not be grieved for you shall be elevated (victorious) if you are indeed believers."* This verse cites belief as the condition for sovereignty. Whereas Muslims today wait for Allāh's help, they fail to fulfil the condition by continuing to sin.

Turning back to the verses of Surah Sāffāt, the next verse consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"So ignore them for a while. Keep watching them, for they shall soon see."* Consequently, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم waited, but the wait was not long, when it culminated in the battle of Badr, where the disbelievers were crushed.

"Do they seek to hasten Our punishment (by asking when it will arrive). So when it descends on their plain, then the morning of those warned will be evil indeed" because they will be annihilated.

Allāh repeats the above verses when He says, *"Ignore them for a while. Keep watching, for they shall soon see."*

(180) Your Lord, the Lord of all honour is Pure from what they attribute to Him. (181) Peace be upon the messengers. (182) And all praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the universe.

ALLĀH, THE LORD OF ALL HONOUR IS PURE FROM WHATEVER THEY ASCRIBE TO HIM

These concluding verses of the Surah summarise the entire Surah. It states that Allāh is the Sole Owner and distributor of honour, and that He is free of whatever partners and children the polytheists attribute to Him.

The second verse conveys peace upon all the Prophets عليهم السلام collectively. Elsewhere in the Surah, peace was conveyed on individual Prophets عليهم السلام.

ALL PRAISE BELONGS TO ALLĀH

The Surah concludes with the words, *"And all praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the universe."* Every act of Allāh's is praiseworthy and He will always be Worthy of praise in every situation and in every era.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه that the person who recites these three verses after every Salāh will have an entire scale worth of rewards. Certain Ahadīth report the virtue of reciting these verses after a gathering. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v.23 p.159*]

سورة ص

Makkan	Surah Sad	Verses 88

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

صٓ ۚ وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ ذِى ٱلذِّكْرِ (1) بَلِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فِى عِزَّةٍ وَشِقَاقٍ (2) كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّن قَرْنٍ فَنَادَوا۟ وَّلَاتَ حِينَ مَنَاصٍ (3) وَعَجِبُوٓا۟ أَن جَآءَهُم مُّنذِرٌ مِّنْهُمْ ۖ وَقَالَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ هَٰذَا سَٰحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ (4) أَجَعَلَ ٱلْءَالِهَةَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ عُجَابٌ (5) وَٱنطَلَقَ ٱلْمَلَأُ مِنْهُمْ أَنِ ٱمْشُوا۟ وَٱصْبِرُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ ءَالِهَتِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ يُرَادُ (6) مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَٰذَا فِى ٱلْمِلَّةِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا ٱخْتِلَٰقٌ (7) أَءُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلذِّكْرُ مِنۢ بَيْنِنَا ۚ بَلْ هُمْ فِى شَكٍّ مِّن ذِكْرِى ۖ بَل لَّمَّا يَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابِ (8) أَمْ عِندَهُمْ خَزَآئِنُ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّكَ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْوَهَّابِ (9) أَمْ لَهُم مُّلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۖ فَلْيَرْتَقُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَسْبَٰبِ (10) جُندٌ مَّا هُنَالِكَ مَهْزُومٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَحْزَابِ (11) كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ ذُو ٱلْأَوْتَادِ (12) وَثَمُودُ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ وَأَصْحَٰبُ لْـَٔيْكَةِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ (13) إِن كُلٌّ إِلَّا كَذَّبَ ٱلرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ عِقَابِ (14)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Sād. By the oath of that Qur'ān, which is a Reminder. (2) In fact, the disbelievers are steeped in tribalism and conflict. (3) How many were the nations that We destroyed before them! Those people cried out, but it was not the time for escape. (4) They are surprised that a warner has come from among them. The disbelievers say, "He is a magician and a great liar." (5) "Has he made all the many gods into one god? This is indeed something strange!" (6) Their superiors passed saying, "Carry on, and remain devoted to your gods. Undoubtedly, this is something purposeful." (7) "We have not heard about this in the other creeds. This is merely some fabrication." (8) "Does some speech descend on him from among us?" However, they are in doubt concerning My

revelation. The fact is that they have not yet tasted My punishment. (9) Or do they have possession of the treasures of mercy that belong to your Lord, the Mighty, the Benevolent? (10) Or does the kingdom of the heavens, the earth, and all between these belong to them? In that case, they should climb the ladders. (11) Here, there is an army of people who are from the defeated hordes. (12) Before them, the nations of Nūh denied, as well as the Ād and pharaoh (Fir'aun) the man of pegs... (13) .And the Thamūd, the people of Lūt, and the people of Aykah. These were the hordes. (14) These were the people who denied the messengers. Therefore, My punishment had to come.

WARNINGS FOR THOSE WHO REJECT ONENESS OF ALLAH AND RISĀLAH (*PROPHETHOOD*)

Allāh begins the Surah with the word, *"Sād"* which is from the Muqatta'āt letters. Only Allāh knows the meaning of these letters. Before proceeding with the commentary, let us first acquaint ourselves with the circumstances surrounding the revelation of these verses.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that when Abu Tālib fell ill, the Quraysh came to see him, as did the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. While they were there, the Quraysh complained to him about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Turning to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Abu Tālib asked, "O my brother's son! What do you want of these people?"

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "I want only one word from them, by virtue of which all the Arabs will become subservient to them, and all non-Arabs will pay them Jizya (*Non-Muslim tax in an Islamic State*)." Abu Tālib said, "You want them to recite only this one word?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Yes, just one word. O my uncle, say *'Lā Ilāha illAllāh.'*"

The members of the Quraysh sitting there said, *"Should we believe in only one god? We have not heard such a thing in any other creed. You have fabricated this."* It was with regard to this incident that the above verses of Surah Sād were revealed up to the words, *"This is merely some fabrication."* [*Tirmidhi*]

"By the oath of that Qur'ān, which is a Reminder." i.e. By the oath of this Qur'ān, the statements of the disbelievers are false.

"In fact, the disbelievers are steeped in tribalism and conflict (with the truth). How many were the nations that We destroyed before them! Those people cried out (in repentance when the punishment seized them), but it was not the time for escape." When Allāh's punishment arrives, nothing can save a person. Even Taubah (*repentance*) is not accepted then.

NOTE: The concluding Arabic words in the above verse (Lāta Hīna) are unanimously written as one word in all the scripts of the Qur'ān. This is correct according to the Scholars, and it has thus been written in this manner throughout the ages. This has been established by Tawātur.

However, there is an Imām of Qur'ān by the name of Sayyidina Abu Ubaid Qāsim bin Sallām رحمة الله عليه, who is of the opinion that the words should be joined (i.e. the 'Lā should be separate, and 'Tahīn' should be separate). He says that he

personally saw it written in this manner in the Uthmāni script of the Qur'ān.

Imām Shātbi رحمة الله عليه writes that all the Scholars have strongly objected to the opinion of Sayyidina Abu Ubaid رحمة الله عليه. Although Sayyidina Abu Ubaid رحمة الله عليه may be an Imām (*One who leads the congregational Salāh, leader*), his opinion is a solitary opinion, which stands in opposition to Tawātur. Therefore, Scholars have not favoured this opinion. Imām Jazari رحمة الله عليه has also stated that this opinion is weak.

Based on this difference, the law of stopping during these words will also differ. Consequently, according to the opinion of the majority, it will be incorrect to stop after the word "Lā", and then to resume by reciting "Tahīn". This will only be permissible according to the opinion of Imām Abu Ubaid رحمة الله عليه.

Mulla Ali Qāri رحمة الله عليه says that the recitation of Imām Abu Ubaid رحمة الله عليه is very rare because it even contradicts the rules of Arabic grammar. He also writes that the majority are of the opinion that if a person has to stop at the word "*Lāt*", he should recite it as "*Lāt*" and not as "*Lā*".

"They are surprised that a warner has come from among them." They were surprised on two counts. The first was their surprise that a human being should be a Holy Prophet . The second was that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was made the Holy Prophet instead of some notable person. In Surah Zukhruf, Allāh quotes them as saying, *"Why is this Qur'ān not revealed to a prominent man from one of the two cities?"* [*Surah 43, verse 31*]

"The disbelievers say, 'He is a magician and a great liar. " They said this when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم showed them his miracles.

Furthermore, they said, *"Has he made all the many gods into one god? This is indeed something strange!"* Since the Quraysh were following the ways of their predecessors, who worshipped many gods, they could not understand the concept of divine unity. When a plausible concept contradicts a customary practice, people tend to become fanatical. It was because of this that the Quraysh found oneness of Allāh to be strange.

"Their superiors passed saying, 'Carry on, and remain devoted to your gods.'" The elders among the Quraysh advised their people to carry on with their lives and not to remain in the company of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because he should not influence them.

They also added, *"Undoubtedly, this is something purposeful."* This sentence may be interpreted in three ways. According to the first interpretation, the verse would read, *"There is an objective behind this."* Therefore, the Quraysh leaders indoctrinated their people to believe that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had ulterior motives behind his message. This motive, they meant to convince people, was that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم (Allāh forbid!) wanted to be a ruler.

Other commentators have tendered a second interpretation, saying that the superiors impressed upon others that the objective of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was purposeful, and that he would not be swayed off his course. They knew that they can expect no compromises from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The third interpretation is that the disbelievers believed that the advent of

the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his message were among the calamities of time, which was headed their way. There was nothing they could do about it, but to swallow their anger and persevere. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

The polytheists also said, *"We have not heard about this in the other creeds."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentions that they referred to the Christian faith in this verse. This was the last divine religion at the time, which the Christians had adulterated and corrupted. The Quraysh said this based on what they heard from the Christians. At that time the Christians had also forsaken oneness of Allāh and succumbed to the belief of Trinity.

The Quraysh also added, *"This* (oneness of Allāh) *is merely some fabrication. Does some speech descend on him from among us?"* They meant to say that there were so many affluent and influential people among them but the Prophet hood was not given to them. They said that if any divine scripture was to be revealed, it ought to have been revealed to one of these wealthy persons, not to Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh says further, *"However, they are in doubt concerning My revelation. The fact is that they have not yet tasted My punishment."* These people say these things and refuse to believe because they have not yet been punished. If Allāh was to ever punish them, they will be forced to accept. However, it will then be too late, for their acceptance will not profit them.

"Or do they have possession of the treasures of mercy that belong to your Lord, the Mighty, the Benevolent?" This verse tells the polytheists that they have no right to question Allāh' s decision to confer apostleship on whoever He wills. He confers this mantle on people according to His wisdom. These polytheists have no choice in the matter, and do not have the least control over Allāh's treasures of mercy. What right have they to object?

"Or does the kingdom of the heavens, the earth, and all between these, belong to them?" None of these are in their control because Allāh reserves the authority over all of these. Therefore, they have no right to question Allāh's authority in any matter whatsoever.

Allāh adds, *"In that case, they should climb the ladders."* i.e. If these people have any say in the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, why do they not ascend into the heavens? However, the fact is that they do not have any say in the affairs of the heavens and the earth. How can they then object to Allāh's doings?

"Here (in Makkah) *there is an army of people who are from the defeated hordes."* Allāh says that the people of Makkah, who oppose the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, are birds of the same feather as those who were destroyed before them. Just as the previous nations were defeated, the Quraysh also suffered a defeat at Badr. Certain commentators are of the opinion that *"the defeated hordes"* refer to the mass of parties that attacked Madinah on the occasion of the Battle of Khandaq (The Trench). They were defeated and had to return crestfallen to their homes. This verse therefore consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that his enemies will soon be vanquished, just as the nations of the past were defeated. [*Qurtubi, v.15 p. 153*]

THE DESTROYED NATIONS OF THE PAST

"Before them, the nations of Nūh denied, as well as the Ād, and Fir'aun the man of pegs, the Thamūd, the people of Lūt, and the people of Aykah. These were the hordes. These were the people who denied the messengers. Therefore, My punishment had to come." The punishments that Allāh inflicted upon these nations have been mentioned in numerous verses of the Qur'ān, and is common knowledge.

"The people of Aykah" were the people of Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام. They lived in a forest, and were punished by means of the "canopy". When they all took shelter under a cloud on account of the severe heat, they were destroyed as they stood. The details are given in the commentary of verse 189 of Surah Shu'arā (*Surah 26*).

THE MEANING OF "MAN OF PEGS"

Allāh describes pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* as the *"man of pegs"*. Some commentators say that he was called the *"man of pegs"* because he used pegs to torture people. He used to tie people to pillars and then hammer a peg into each hand and foot. They would then be left to die, suffering in this condition.

Other commentators state that he derived this title because of the amazing stability of his kingdom. Yet another group of commentators state that the title refers to his large army. Wherever his army camped, many tents had to be erected, all needing pegs to support them. Because of the large number of pegs, his army is referred to as "pegs". Hence, *"man of pegs"* will be translated as "man of armies". [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

وَمَا يَنظُرُ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً مَّا لَهَا مِن فَوَاقٍ ﴿١٥﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا عَجِّل لَّنَا قِطَّنَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿١٦﴾

(15) These people are waiting only for a single shout, which will not allow even breath to be taken. (16) They say, "O our Lord! Hurry with our share before the Day of Reckoning."

THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE DISBELIEVERS

When the polytheists heard the warnings of punishment for disbelief, and about the plight that previous nations suffered, they used to mock it and pay no heed. With regard to this behaviour, Allāh says, *"These people are waiting only for a single shout, which will not allow even a breath to be taken."* An intelligent person is he who does not wait for the advent of Judgment day, when it will be too late. Rather, he accepts and believes.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه says that this verse is similar to the verses of Surah Yāsīn, where Allāh says, *"They await only a single scream to seize them while they are arguing. They will then be unable to make any bequest, nor shall they return to their families."* [*Surah 36, verses 49 and 50*]

In explaining this verse of Surah Sād, Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه mentions that, after the Battle of Badr, the polytheists seemed to be waiting only for Judgment day. Instead, they should have taken a lesson from the result of the battle and become Muslims. When the Judgment day will take place, none will be allowed the respite even to take a breath.

However, these people are too foolish to consider their own welfare. Rather, they invoke curses upon themselves by saying, *"O our Lord! Hurry with our share* (of punishment) *before the Day of Reckoning."* They foolishly say that it is not necessary to wait until the Judgment day for their punishment to be meted out. They would rather prefer it immediately. They say this because they do not believe in the advent of Judgment day. Otherwise, no person would ask for punishment.

(17) Be patient with all they say and remember Our slave Dawūd, the strong. He was certainly penitent. (18) Verily, We subjugated the mountains with him, who would glorify Allāh by evening and at daybreak. (19) We also subjugated the birds, who all gathered together. They were all penitent towards Allāh. (20) We strengthened his kingdom and granted him wisdom and decisive speech.

ALLĀH CONSOLES THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم BY MENTIONING SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to be distressed by the statements of the polytheists. The above verse advises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be patient about all that they say and also advises him to think of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. Describing Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, Allāh says that he was *"strong"* and *"penitent"*.

Allāh then describes the Tasbīh (*glorification*) of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, saying that He instructed the mountains and birds to join Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام in Tasbīh (*glorification*). Allāh adds, *"They were all penitent towards Allāh."* this means that all these creations of Allāh engaged in Tasbīh (Allāh's glorification). Refer to the commentary of verse 10 of Surah Saba where subject matter of a similar import was discussed.

Allāh further says about Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, *"We strengthened his kingdom and granted him wisdom* (Prophethood) *and decisive speech.* "Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was very clear in his speech, making it easy for others to understand.

Hereafter, Allāh mentions an incident regarding Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, highlighting his patience. This incident serves to relate the verse: *"Be patient with all they say"* to the verse: *"and remember Our slave Dawūd."*

۞وَهَلْ أَتَىٰكَ نَبَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَصْمِ إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا۟ ٱلْمِحْرَابَ ﴿21﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ دَاوُۥدَ فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ ۖ
قَالُوا۟ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ خَصْمَانِ بَغَىٰ بَعْضُنَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا تُشْطِطْ وَٱهْدِنَآ
إِلَىٰ سَوَآءِ ٱلصِّرَٰطِ ﴿22﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَآ أَخِى لَهُۥ تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَعْجَةً وَلِىَ نَعْجَةٌ وَٰحِدَةٌ فَقَالَ
أَكْفِلْنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِى فِى ٱلْخِطَابِ ﴿23﴾ قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعْجَتِكَ إِلَىٰ نِعَاجِهِۦ ۖ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنَ ٱلْخُلَطَآءِ لَيَبْغِى بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ ۗ
وَظَنَّ دَاوُۥدُ أَنَّمَا فَتَنَّٰهُ فَٱسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُۥ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ۩ ﴿24﴾ فَغَفَرْنَا لَهُۥ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَإِنَّ لَهُۥ
عِندَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَـَٔابٍ ﴿25﴾

(21) Has the news about the disputants reached you, when they scaled the wall and entered his sanctuary? (22) When they entered upon Dawūd, he became alarmed at their presence. They said, "Do not be afraid. We are merely two disputants. One of us has transgressed against the other, so judge between us with the truth. Do not be unjust towards us and guide us to the straight path." (23) "This is my brother. He has ninety-nine ewes, while I have only one ewe. He said, 'Give it to me!' and he has been harsh towards me in speech." (24) Dawūd عليه السلام said, "He has oppressed you by asking for your ewe to add to his ewes. Indeed, there are many partners who transgress against each other, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds. And these are but a few." It occurred to Dawūd that We had tested him, so he sought forgiveness from his Lord, fell prostrate, and turned to Him in repentance. (25) So We forgave him for that. Undoubtedly, he has a close position to Us, and a favourable return.

TWO PERSONS COME TO SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام, REQUESTING JUDGEMENT IN THEIR DISPUTE

These verses make reference to an incident involving Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, while the verses thereafter announce that Allāh made him His deputy on earth and instructed him to judge between people with justice. In the above incident, two persons scaled the wall of a sanctuary that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام had built specifically for worship (this is referred to as the 'Mihrāb'). These two persons required Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام to pass judgement in their dispute. Naturally, when he saw the two appear suddenly before him, he became alarmed.

Sensing his fear, the two put him at ease, assuring him that they were not thieves, but a plaintiff and a defendant. They told him that the one party had transgressed against the other, and that he should pass judgement between them and show them the way.

The first person spoke, *"This is my brother (in faith). He has ninety-nine ewes, while I have only one ewe. He said, 'Give it to me!' and he (did not address me in a manner that someone making a request would. Instead, he) has been harsh towards me in*

speech."

With reference to their situation, Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام replied, *"He has oppressed you by asking for your ewe to add to his ewes."* Then, making reference to the behaviour of people in general, he said, *'Indeed, there are many partners* (in business, as well as those who live together) *who transgress against each other, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds. And these are but a few."*

Allāh began the above discussion with the words, *"Be patient with all they say and remember Our slave Dawūd."* This denotes that the incident of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام is one in which patience was required. Therefore, an analysis of the incident should reveal aspects of patience. The Ahadīth provide no further details of the incident to highlight such aspects. However, judging from the Qur'ānic verses, it becomes evident that the two persons came to Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام during a time that he was engaged in Ibādah (worship). It was not the time for hearing cases. In addition to this, they entered his sanctuary in a most unusual manner, which startled Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام.

Furthermore, they addressed him saying, *"so judge between us with the truth. Do not be unjust towards us and guide us to the straight path."* This manner of speech seems disrespectful, in addition to the fact that it implied that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام could actually be unjust and misleading.

Besides being a Prophet of Allāh, Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was also a powerful king. However, he tolerated their approach, overlooked their rudeness and heard their case.

SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام IS TESTED AND REPENTS

"It occurred to Dawūd that We had tested him, so he sought forgiveness from his Lord, fell prostrate, and turned to Him in repentance." Since Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام exercised the patience required of him and passed the correct verdict, how was he tested? The following explanations have been tendered:

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام listened only to the plea of the plaintiff. He did not ask the defendant for his side of the story, which is contrary to the practice of law, and seems to denote bias.

If the defendant did admit to the offence, Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام should have told him that he had oppressed the plaintiff, instead of telling the plaintiff that the defendant had oppressed him. This form of address also denotes bias in favour of the plaintiff.

When Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام realised that this case was a test for him, he immediately repented, because notable personalities are taken to task for acts that seem most insignificant to others. Allāh forgave him, and even adds, *"Undoubtedly, he has a close position to Us, and a favourable return."*

In an unsubstantiated narration, "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that the two disputants were Jibril عليه السلام and Sayyidina Mika'īl عليه السلام. When the royal guards denied them entry into the sanctuary, they scaled the walls to gain access. It is not farfetched to believe that the two could have been these two angels, because it was not possible for humans to scale that high a wall.

However, if it be assumed that they two were angels, several questions arise. What dispute would angels have about ewes? Why would one transgress against the other? Why would one speak harshly to the other? Since they have no association with the things of this world, why would they lie to Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام?

Commentators explain that the angels merely stated a hypothetical situation. They meant to ask Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام what would be his decision if such a scenario developed. This was a means they employed to test him.

The "Mustadrak of Hākim" has reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was tested because of the little vanity that crept into his heart. He reports that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام once said, "O Allāh! Every moment during the day and night, there is a member of Dawūd's family busy in Salāh, Tasbīh, Takbīr, or some other form of Your worship."

Thereupon, Allāh told him, "O Dawūd! This all occurs with My assistance. If it were not for My assistance, you would never be able to engage in My worship. By my Honour, I shall hand over a day to you." Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام then asked Allāh to inform him which day that would be. It was on that very day that the two disputants scaled the wall. [*Mustadrak of Hākim, v.2 p.433*]

While the above incident does not seem to explain the test, certain Scholars have mentioned that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was negligent of Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* during the period when he presided over the case. Although passing judgement is a form of worship, it is unlike the direct acts of worship, like Salāh, remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*, etc. This was the test that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام understood. Allāh knows best.

THE GENERAL PRACTICE OF BUSINESS PARTNERS

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام mentioned that partners commonly tend to oppress each other in their dealings. However, there are exceptions. These are people who have belief and carry out righteous deeds. Unfortunately, such people are very few. This statement of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام expresses the nature of partnerships as being volatile, being prone to disputes and betrayal. Fortunate indeed is the person who is saved from these trials.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh says, "I am the third of two partners (i.e. I am assisting them) as long as none betrays the other. When any of them betrays the other, I separate myself from them (i.e. I stop assisting them)." [*Abu Dawūd*]

A SUPPLICATION OF SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was extremely devoted to Allāh's worship and remembrance *(Dhikr)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Allāh loves most the Salāh of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام and the fasting of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام used to sleep until half the night has passed, after which he used to engage in Allāh's worship for the next third of the night. He

then slept for the remaining sixth of the night. He also fasted every alternate day. [*Bukhari v.1 p.486*]

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that one of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام Supplications was:

{TRANSLATION: "O Allāh! I ask You for Your love, for the love of those who love you, and for those actions that will let me reach Your love. O Allāh! Make your love more beloved to me than my own self, my wealth, my family, and cold water."} ["*Mishkāt*" p. 220]

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to speak to the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم about Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, he used to say that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام worshipped Allāh more than any other human. [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام used to earn a living by the effort of his own hands [*Bukhari*]. His trade was that he used to make armour, which he sold. In this manner, he was able to provide for his own needs, as well as contribute considerably to the poor.

THE SAJDAH (*PROSTRATION*) TO BE MADE IN SURAH SĀD

According to the followers of the Shāfi'ī school of jurisprudence, no Sajdah (*prostration*) has to be made when reciting the above verse of Surah Sād. However, Sajdah (*prostration*) will be made according to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to make the Sajdah Tilāwah (*prostration of recitation*) in Surah Sād, and said, *"Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام made this Sajdah as Taubah* (*prostration for repentance*)*. We shall make it out of gratitude."* ["*Mishkāt*" *p. 94*]

REFUTING A DEFAMATORY INCIDENT

With regard to the story of the two disputants, certain books narrate an incident that is defamatory to the high status of the Prophet عليه السلام.

The incident tells that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام once saw a woman, with whom he fell in love. In an effort to marry her, he sent her husband out in Jihād. The husband was eventually martyred, after which Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام married the lady. This story is a fallacious lie, which is from the narrations of the Bani Isra'īl (Isra'īliyāt).

It is surprising that Imām Hākim رحمة الله عليه has narrated this incident in his "Mustadrak" (*v.2 p.586/7*), and that Hāfidh Dhahabi رحمة الله عليه has not commented on it in his "Talkhīs" of the "Mustadrak."

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه has mentioned that he will afflict a double penalty on the person who says such things about Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام and believes in it (i.e. 160 lashes). ["*Ruhul Ma'āni*", *v.23 p.185*]

The author of "Jalālain" has written that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام had 99 wives, whereas the complainant has only one, which Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام wanted for himself. This narration is also from the Isrā'īlites, which is insulting to

the Prophets عليهم السلام. It also unsubstantiated.

يَـٰدَاوُۥدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَـٰكَ خَلِيفَةً فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌۢ بِمَا نَسُوا۟ يَوْمَ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٦﴾

(26) O Dawūd.' Indeed, We have made you a deputy on earth, so judge between people with the truth, and do not follow carnal passions which will mislead you from Allāh 's path. Verily there shall be a severe punishment for those who deviate from Allāh 's path because they forgot the Day of Reckoning.

THE DECLARATION OF SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام AS ALLĀH'S CALIPH (DEPUTY)

Allāh addresses Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام in the above verse saying, *"O Dawūd! Indeed, We have made you a deputy on earth, so judge between people with the truth, and do not follow carnal passions which will mislead you from Allāh 's path."* It is compulsory for every ruler to be just in his judgement. However, the responsibility is greater when a person is a Caliph (deputy) as well as a Prophet of Allāh. It is absolutely essential for such a person to remain firmly on the side of truth justice.

THE EVIL OF FOLLOWING ONE'S PASSIONS

Allāh continues to address Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام saying, *"and do not follow carnal passions which will mislead you from Allāh 's path."* In essence, a person can follow only one of two things, viz. Huda (guidance), or Hawā (passions). Huda will entail everything that stems from Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is not permissible to follow anything that does not stem from these two sources, and which follows the dictates of the carnal self. Following the carnal passions prevents a person from fulfilling the obligations of the Shari'ah.

Many judges and magistrates pass judgement that is contrary to the laws of the Shari'ah. They also accept bribes and favour their relatives (nepotism) when passing their verdict. Allāh declares in Surah Nisā, *"O you who believe, be firm in establishing justice and be witness for Allāh even if it be against yourselves, your parents and relatives. Be he affluent or poor, Allāh is closer to each of them. So do not follow your passions in enforcing justice."* [*Surah 4, verse 135*]

It may also occur that unjust decisions are passed because of enmity between people. In this regard, Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"Let not enmity for a nation provoke you to be unjust. Be just! It is closer to piety, and fear Allāh! Indeed Allāh is Informed of what you do."* [*Surah 5, verse 8*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Do you people know what Allāh says about the people who will first reach His shade on the Judgment day?"* The Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم replied, "Allāh and His

Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم know best." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "They are those people who accept their right when it is given to them, and fully hand over any right when it is asked of them. They are people who pass judgement in favour of others just as they would like others to pass judgement in their favour." ["Mishkāt" p. 322]

Following one's whims leads one to misinterpret the Qur'ān and Ahadīth, holding a bad opinion of the Scholars, and devising ways to avoid paying Zakāh. To substantiate their legalisation of nudity and usury, some hide behind the writings of people who are bereft of sincerity, piety and knowledge. Following carnal passions spurs people to roam around naked, dance, delight in unlawful glances and hanker after wealth and fame. In pursuit of all this, they trample upon the injunctions of the Shari'ah. Some will then deprive legal heirs of their inheritance, especially female heirs. These, and many other evils are the direct result of ambitiously pursuing carnal desires.

On the other hand, there are those who follow the guidance of Allāh, brought by His illustrious Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They make it the purpose of their lives and heed to every command.

FOLLOWING CARNAL PASSIONS MISLEADS PEOPLE

Allāh cautions Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام saying, *"do not follow carnal passions which will mislead you from Allāh's path."* Just as a person who follows the dictates of his carnal passions becomes oblivious of the Shari'ah in this world, this subservience to his passions will mislead him from Allāh's path in the Hereafter as well. Although the person may do things in the name of Dīn (*religion*) and piety, his deeds will be contrary to the Shari'ah if he is a victim of his passions.

Those people who worship graves, idolise their saints and carry out the customs of Urs, do so to satisfy their carnal passions. People are more prone to follow these Bid'ah (*heresy*) acts than to follow the Sunnah. This is because the acts of Bid'ah (*heresy*) are their innovations, tailored to please them and Satan.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Satan says, 'I destroyed people by casting them into sin, but they destroy me by Istighfār (because they secure forgiveness through Istighfār, thereby putting Satan's efforts to waste). Therefore, I have devised actions that are not in Allāh's Dīn (*religion*), but which suit their desires. They then regard these acts as virtues, on account of which they do not make Istighfār (*seek forgiveness*).'" [*"Targhīb wat Tarhīb"*]

DEVIANT PEOPLE DESERVE SEVERE PUNISHMENT

"Verily there shall be severe punishment for those who deviate from Allāh 's path because they forgot the Day of Reckoning." This verse sounds a warning to those who stray from Allāh' s path and forget about their appointment on the Day of Judgment, when they will have to account for their deeds. The warning contained in this verse applies to every person who strays from Allāh's Dīn (*religion*) in any way.

Specifically, it applies to those people who deny the coming of Judgment day or, if they accept it, they are negligent about it and fail to make adequate

preparations. As a result, they draw Allāh's punishment onto themselves.

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَٰطِلًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٧﴾ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ كَٱلْفُجَّارِ ﴿٢٨﴾ كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢٩﴾

(27) We have not created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two without wisdom. This is the notion of the disbelievers. May the destruction of the Fire be for those who disbelieve. (28) Should We make those who believe and do righteous deeds like those who spread corruption on earth? Should We make the pious ones like the sinners? (29) This is a blessed Book that We have revealed to you so that the people may ponder over its verses, and so that the intelligent ones may take heed.

THE ANARCHISTS AND THE RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE CAN NEVER BE ALIKE, NEITHER CAN THE PIOUS AND THE SINNERS EVER BE ALIKE

Mention has already been made of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. Soon mention will also be made of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام and then of Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام. The above three verses appear in between and make mention of oneness of Allāh, Risālah (*prophethood*) and Judgment day. These three subjects are constantly referred to in the Qur'ān, and form the basic requirements for success in the Hereafter.

The verses tell us that the heavens, the earth and whatever is contained between the two have not been created in vain and without reason. The first objective of all this creation is to recognise the immense power and grandeur of Allāh. Man should also ponder about the reason behind the creation of everything. There are humans as well as other creations in this world. There exists love between them, as well as oppression, disputes and killing. There are believers on earth as well as disbelievers. Man should ponder over the reason for which Allāh has created the entire system of the universe. Upon deep reflection, he will realise that Allāh has created everything for a purpose, based on His perfect wisdom.

Although belief and disbelief both co-exist in this world, the entire universe will soon come to an end. Thereafter, every man will be required to render an account of his deeds. The people of belief will succeed, whereas the people of disbelief will be punished. However, people who do not believe in the advent of Judgment day hold the opinion that there will be no recompense for good and evil deeds. In their estimation, people who do good are the same as those who perpetrate evil because neither will be rewarded or punished. People holding such beliefs are destined for destruction, which will manifest itself when they

enter Hell.

Of course, there is a clear distinction between those who have Belief and carry out good deeds, as opposed to the anarchists. The good believers are destined for Heaven, while the anarchists are headed for Hell. It will be extremely foolish of the sinners to think that the pious believers will receive no rewards, or that they (the sinners) will receive the same bounties of Heaven that is promised to the righteous believers.

After discussing oneness of Allāh and Judgment day, Allāh now addresses the issue of Risālat (*prophethood*). Allāh says, *"This is a blessed Book that We have revealed to you so that the people may ponder over its verses, and so that the intelligent ones may take heed."* Those who recite and practise the injunctions of the Qur'ān will glean from its blessed nature by acquiring the best of both worlds. It is the duty of every intelligent person to understand the laws of the Shari'ah and implement them.

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُۥدَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ نِعْمَ ٱلْعَبْدُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٣٠﴾ إِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ بِٱلْعَشِىِّ ٱلصَّٰفِنَٰتُ ٱلْجِيَادُ ﴿٣١﴾ فَقَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ ٱلْخَيْرِ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّى حَتَّىٰ تَوَارَتْ بِٱلْحِجَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾ رُدُّوهَا عَلَىَّ ۖ فَطَفِقَ مَسْحًۢا بِٱلسُّوقِ وَٱلْأَعْنَاقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

(30) We gifted Sulaymān to Dawūd. A fine slave indeed! He was certainly most penitent. (31) When horses of the finest breed bending one foreleg were presented before him one evening. (32) He said, "Indeed, I have given preference to the wealth of this world over the remembrance of my Lord until it hid behind the veil." (33) "Return them to me." He then began to stroke their legs and manes.

THE INCIDENT OF THE HORSES THAT WERE PRESENTED BEFORE SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام

Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام was the son of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. Allāh had also granted him a kingdom and abundant wealth along with Prophethood. Allāh says about him, *"A fine slave indeed! He was certainly most penitent."*

The Qur'ān relates the incident of the well-bred horses that were presented to Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام one evening. It appears that the horses were reared for Jihād. The Arabic word "Sāfināt" refers to horses that bend one foreleg off the ground and stand on the remaining three. This is one of the qualities of a thoroughbred horse.

Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام once instructed that the horses be presented before him for inspection. It transpired that he became so distracted watching the horses, that the sun set, causing him to miss his Salāh. If the Salāh was a Fardh (*obligatory*) Salāh, he would be excused because he completely forgot, and none reminded him. If the Salāh was a Optional Salāh, then there is no question of a

sin.

Nevertheless, he was distressed that his involvement with the horses distracted him from his Salāh. Although the inspection was also for Allāh's pleasure (therefore also a form of Allāh's remembrance), he still disliked that it should distract him from the direct remembrance of Allāh. When he remembered that he had missed the Salāh, he called for the horses to be returned. When they were brought back to him, he began to slaughter each one of them saying, *"Indeed, I have given preference to the wealth of this world over the remembrance of my Lord."*

As he slaughtered them, he also cut off their legs. This slaughtering of the horses will not be regarded as a waste of wealth, but as a sacrificial offering. In my humble opinion, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام cut off their legs after they were dead so as not to put them through additional suffering. He severed their legs because they made the horses valuable. The fact that the verse makes mention of the legs before the manes does not mean that he cut off the legs first, because many words are mentioned before others for reasons of eloquence, not for reasons of priority. An example of this is in Surah TāHā [Surah 20, verse 70], where Allāh says, *"the Lord of Hārūn and Mūsa"*, whereas a verse of Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verse 122*] mentions, *"The Lord of Mūsa and Hārūn."*

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَٰنَ وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلَىٰ كُرْسِيِّهِۦ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ أَنَابَ ﴿34﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَهَبْ لِى مُلْكًا لَّا يَنۢبَغِى لِأَحَدٍ مِّنۢ بَعْدِىٓ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْوَهَّابُ ﴿35﴾ فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ ٱلرِّيحَ تَجْرِى بِأَمْرِهِۦ رُخَآءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ ﴿36﴾ وَٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّآءٍ وَغَوَّاصٍ ﴿37﴾ وَءَاخَرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِى ٱلْأَصْفَادِ ﴿38﴾ هَٰذَا عَطَآؤُنَا فَٱمْنُنْ أَوْ أَمْسِكْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿39﴾ وَإِنَّ لَهُۥ عِندَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَـَٔابٍ ﴿40﴾

(34) Verily We tested Sulaymān and I cast a body on his throne, after which he turned (to Us). (35) He said, "O my Lord! Forgive me and grant me a kingdom that cannot be had by any other after me. Undoubtedly, You are the Great Giver." (36) So We subjugated the wind for him, which would blow gently by his command wherever he wished to go. (37) (We also subjugated) the shayātīn for him, who were builders and divers. (38) Besides these (Satans) there were others who were shackled in chains. (39) "This is Our gift, so spend or withhold without any accountability." (40) Undoubtedly, he has a close position to Us, and a favourable return.

THE TEST AND SUPPLICATION OF SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام. THE SATAN ARE AT HIS SERVICE, WHILE OTHERS ARE CHAINED

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه

وسلم that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام once resolved to cohabit with each of his seventy wives on a certain night. He intended to father a dynamic horseman from each wife, all of whom would be warriors in Jihād. An angel who was with him advised him to say "Insha Allāh" ("If Allāh wills"). However, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام was determined and, although he knew within his heart that everything occurs only with Allāh's will, he did not say the words. It then transpired that only one of the wives conceived. She finally bore only an unformed foetus, which lacked half of its torso. After narrating the story, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام had said, 'Insha Allāh', he would have fathered seventy boys who would have all fought in Jihād." [*Bukhari v.1 Pg .487*]

The commentators have narrated the above incident, stating that this was the test referred to in the verse. The malformed foetus was the *"body"* that was cast onto his throne. When Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام realised his error, he immediately turned to Allāh in repentance.

In addition to his supplication for forgiveness, he prayed, *"and grant me a kingdom that cannot be had by any other after me. Undoubtedly, You are the Great Giver."* Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام added an attribute of Allāh to each end of his supplication, which is among the etiquette of supplication.

Allāh accepted his supplication. Whereas previously he had control over horses, Allāh now placed the winds at his service. The winds would carry him to any destination he wished. Allāh describes the swiftness of the wind in Surah Saba, where He says, *"We subjugated the wind for Sulaymān. Its travel in the morning was a month's journey and its travel by the evening was a month's journey."* Although the wind travelled swiftly, it blew very gently so that no one was jolted about while travelling. Today's modern aircraft have proven that speed and comfort can be combined.

Just as Allāh placed the winds at his service, Allāh also arranged an army of servants and soldiers for him. The Jinn were also placed at his command. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام used them to construct buildings and to dive for jewels. There were a multitude of other duties they performed for him, some of which are mentioned in verse 82 of Surah Anbiya (*Surah 21*) and verse 13 of Surah Saba (*Surah 34*).

Allāh also granted Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام the power to keep many of the Satans in shackles. It appears that this was the punishment for those Jinn who did not obey the instructions that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام issued.

Referring to these great bounties that Allāh conferred on Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام, Allāh tells him, *"This is Our gift, so spend or withhold without any accountability."* Allāh gave Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام the authority to utilise his wealth as he pleased, without having to account for it. Thereafter, Allāh mentions another favour upon Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام, which was also conferred on his father, Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, he has a close position to Us, and a favourable return."*

NOTE: No person after Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام ever enjoyed a kingdom like his. This was a result of the supplication that he made

when he said, *"and grant me a kingdom that cannot be had by any other after me."* Although there have been people after Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام who exercised some control over the Jinn, it cannot be proven whether any other had control of the wind.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told them, "An evil Jinn made an attempt to interrupt my Salāh last night. However, Allāh granted me the power to arrest the Jinn. I intended to tie him to a pillar in the Masjid for you all to see, but I then recollected the Supplication of my brother Sulaymān, who said, *'O my Lord! Forgive me and grant me a kingdom that cannot be had by any other after me. Undoubtedly, You are the Great Giver.'* I then drove the wretched devil away." [*Bukhari v.1 p.487*]

This hadith proves that Allāh can grant any person the ability to capture the Jinn. It was out of respect and regard for Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not shackle the Jinn. He did not want such an act to effect a difference in the unique individual privilege that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام enjoyed. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام desired this privilege very much and he even made the above supplication for it.

وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَآ أَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَسَّنِىَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ (41) ٱرْكُضْ بِرِجْلِكَ هَٰذَا مُغْتَسَلٌۢ بَارِدٌ وَشَرَابٌ (42) وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ أَهْلَهُۥ وَمِثْلَهُم مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ (43) وَخُذْ بِيَدِكَ ضِغْثًا فَٱضْرِب بِّهِۦ وَلَا تَحْنَثْ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَٰهُ صَابِرًا نِّعْمَ ٱلْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ (44)

(41) Call to mind Our slave Ayyūb. When he called his Lord saying, "Verily Satan had afflicted me with pain and difficulty." (42) Strike your foot on the ground. This is cold water for bathing and drinking." (43) We gifted him his family and the like of them in addition, as a mercy from Us and a reminder for people of intelligence. (44) "Take a handful of twigs to hit with, and do not breach your oath." Verily, We found him to be patient. What a fine slave! He was certainly penitent.

THE ILLNESS OF SAYYIDINA AYYŪB عليه السلام, HIS SUPPLICATION, AND CURE

The incident of Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام was discussed in verses 83 and 84 of Surah Anbiya (*Surah 21*). His story is related very briefly in the Qur'ān, hence the details are not clearly known. Only the incident of the golden locusts is reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about him (This will be narrated shortly).

In Durrul Manthūr, Hāfidh Jalālud Dīn Suyyuti رحمة الله عليه has narrated several other reports about Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه, and Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة

عليه الله. However, these narrations are Isrā'īlites, and cannot be relied on.

The following facts have been established from the Qur'ān:

First. *Sayyidina Ayyūb* عليه السلام *suffered a terrible difficulty.*

Second. *Satan was the cause of this difficulty.*

Third. *The difficulty affected his personal health as well as his wealth.*

Fourth. *His family was also destroyed in the process.*

Fifth. *He exercised great patience for which Allāh praises him by saying 'Verily, We found him to be patient. What a fine slave! He was certainly penitent."*

The Isrā'īlites report that Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام suffered for seven years and a few months While Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام enjoyed all types of bounties, he was soon left without any wealth and family. Only his wife remained by his side to care for him. The loyal lady's name was Rahmah.

Surah Anbiya mentions his supplication: *"Difficulty has certainly afflicted me and You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."* His supplication in Surah Sād is: *"Verily Satan had afflicted me with pain and difficulty."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the Arabic word "nusb" (translated above as "pain") refers to the extreme fatigue that one experiences after hard labour. The second word, "adhāb", is translated as "pain", which the verse of Surah Anbiya refers to as "durr" ("difficulty"). Other commentators say that "nusb" and "durr" refer to physical ailments, while "adhāb" refers to the loss of his family and wealth.

After accepting his supplication, Allāh commanded him thus, *"Strike your foot on the ground."* When he did as commanded, a spring of water gushed forth from the ground. Allāh then told him, *"This is cold water for bathing and drinking."* He therefore took a bath in the spring and drank water from it. As a result, Allāh granted him complete cure, both internally and externally.

Allāh also collected his scattered family around him, allowing them to enjoy a life of prosperity once more. Allāh then caused his family to grow to such an extent that they doubled in number. This is the interpretation of the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni", with regard to the verse *"We gifted him his family and the like of them in addition...*

Another interpretation is that since his family members passed away earlier, Allāh granted Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام as many children as he had lost. Ibn Majah reports that the suffering of Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام began on a Wednesday, and he was cured on a Thursday.

Allāh adds that His cure of Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام was *"a mercy from Us and a reminder for people of intelligence."* The incident serves to remind the intelligent ones that Allāh will graciously reward those who exercise patience when afflicted by adversities.

Allāh then commanded Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام saying, *"Take a handful of twigs to hit with, and do not breach your oath."* This refers to an incident during the

illness of Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام, when he became angry with his wife. The commentators have cited many different narrations regarding the reason for his displeasure. However, these are all Isrā'īlites. One such narration, reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, states that Satan once passed by the wife of Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام in the disguise of a physician. When she requested him to treat her husband, Satan said, "I shall cure him without charging you for the treatment and medicines. However, when he is cured, I want you to say that I cured him." She accepted.

When she mentioned this to Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام, he became angry and said, "You promised Satan that you will say that he cures? When I become well, I shall cane you a hundred times." When Allāh cured him, the time came to fulfil his oath to cane her. It was then that Allāh advised him as to how he should fulfil his oath. Allāh told him, *"Take a handful of sticks to hit with, and do not breach your oath."* Allāh advised him to take a hundred twigs in his hand and strike her with them as a substitute for caning her a hundred times. An analogy cannot be drawn from this incident to legalise the substitution of lashing a person once with a hundred whips instead of a hundred continuous lashes. The situation of Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام was an isolated incident, which only applies to him.

Nevertheless, the incident highlights the importance of fulfilling an oath. Although Allāh could have forgiven the oath without any substitution, Allāh did not do so, but decreed that he substitute the act instead. In this way, the position of the oath in Shari'ah is still maintained.

A similar incident is narrated by Abu Dawūd. Sayyidina Abu Umamah bin Sahl bin Hunaif رضى الله عنه reports that a person who was to be lashed for committing adultery with a slave woman had grown extremely weak. When the Ansār came to visit him in his illness, he told them to inquire the ruling from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They explained the situation to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and also added that the person was so weak and frail that only skin and bone were left of him. They also told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the man's bones had become so weak that they would break if people were to bring him before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Consequently, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم to break a branch of a date palm into a hundred parts, which would then be used collectively to strike him. [*v.2 p.258*]

Although the person deserved to receive hundred lashes, he was not physically able to bear this punishment. Since the object of the punishment is not to take the person's life, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم substituted the punishment, so that the penalty does not completely lose its status in the Shari'ah. The penalties in Shari'ah should never be completely waived because the Qur'ān say about those deserving of these penalties, *"And mercy for them (adulterers) should not take hold of you with regard to Allāh's Dīn (religion), if you believe in Allāh and the Last Day."* The injunctions of Shari'ah should therefore be enforced so that people become conscious and are warned. These penalties should not be stalled, nor waived.

NOTE: THE ACCEPTANCE OF SUPPLICATION.

The question arises: *"Did Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام make supplication for health*

during the days in which he suffered"? If he did, why was his supplication not answered? The fact is that Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام must have made supplication to Allāh during those days. However, he had to remain ill for as long as Allāh had predestined. Of course, he received the full rewards of his supplication, as well as an elevation of stages in the Hereafter. His supplication were therefore stored as a treasure for him in the Hereafter.

No supplication of a believer is wasted. Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the supplication of a believer is answered in one of the following three ways, as long as the supplication is not for the severing of family ties, or any other sin.

Firstly. He is granted exactly what he asks for in this world.

Secondly. This supplication is stored as a treasure for him in the Hereafter.

Thirdly. A pending calamity is averted in lieu of his supplication.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said this, the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم said, "We shall then make supplication in abundance." Thereupon, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh gives in abundance." [*"Mishkāt" p. 196*]

EVERYTHING HAPPENS BY THE DECREE OF ALLĀH

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that when Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام was afflicted with the difficulty, Allāh made him forget to make supplication for cure. Although he always engaged in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*, he did not make supplication. He did not have any inclination to make supplication either because he regarded the illness as a means of attaining Allāh' s pleasure. He therefore wanted the illness to remain.

When Allāh decreed that he be cured, Allāh granted him the realisation and ability to make supplication. When he did make supplication, Allāh accepted it and restored his wealth and family. Allāh then praised him by stating, *"Verily, We found him to be patient. What a fine slave! He was certainly penitent."* [*Durrul Manthūr v.4 p.328*]

The fact is that everything in the universe happens by Allāh's decree. supplication is also accepted only when the realisation of the supplication is near at hand. Medicines are also effective only when Allāh's predestination (Taqdīr) ordains that it provides a cure. Allāh maintains complete control over everything. He gives comfort to whoever He wills, while He afflicts whoever He wills with hardship.

Hardships and difficulties are a blessing for the believers because they accrue tremendous rewards for them and elevate their ranks in the Hereafter. We should therefore never think that when a pious person is beset with problems, he must be suffering punishment for his sins.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that on the Judgment day, when people will be granted their rewards for suffering in this world, those who enjoyed comfort and luxury will wish that their skins had

been cut with scissors in this world. ["*Mishkāt*" *p. 137*]

The report of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه (wherein he related that Allāh made Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام forget to make supplication initially), is supported by the following narration of Sayyidina Abān bin Uthmān رضی الله عنه. Sayyidina Abān رضی الله عنه narrates that he heard his father, Sayyidina Uthmān رضی الله عنه say, "the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, 'No harm can come to the person who recites the following supplication thrice every morning and evening:

{TRANSLATION: "In the name of Allāh, with Whose name nothing In the heavens can do harm, and nothing on earth can harm. And He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing."}

Sayyidina Abān رضی الله عنه showed signs of paralysis on a part of his body, which prompted people to look at him in surprise as he narrated this hadith. Detecting their surprise, he asked, "What are you people staring at? Without doubt, the hadith is just as I have narrated it to you. The day when I was afflicted with this, I had forgotten to recite the supplication, thereby allowing Allāh's Taqdīr (*predestination*) to take its course." ["*Mishkāt*" *p. 209*]

CONCLUDING THE INCIDENT OF SAYYIDINA AYYŪB عليه السلام

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that once, when Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام was bathing naked in private, gold locusts began to rain down on him. When he began to collect them in his clothing, Allāh asked him, "O Ayyūb! Have I not made you wealthy enough. You do not need what is before you." Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام replied, "I swear by Your Honour! You have certainly made me wealthy, but I can never be independent of Your blessings."

"Fat'hul Bāri" (*v.6 p.420*) reports on the authority of Ahmad and Ibn Hibbān, that Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه said, "When Allāh cured Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام, He rained gold locusts on him." This narration makes it clear that the incident of the locusts took place after Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام was cured.

"Fat'hul Baari" has also reported that, when Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام was afflicted with the disease, all his friends deserted him, except for two persons. They would still visit him every morning and evening. On one occasion, the two were talking among themselves, when the one said, "Ayyūb must have perpetrated a grave sin. Otherwise, Allāh would certainly have cured him by now." When the other person mentioned this to Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام, he was overcome with grief and made supplication to Allāh.

Thereafter, Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام needed to leave the house to relieve himself. It was then that Allāh sent revelation to him to strike his foot on the ground. When he did as he was commanded, a spring gushed from the earth, in which he bathed. Allāh made this water cure him completely. When his wife came to fetch him, she could not recognise him, and asked, "Where is the sick man who was here? I hope a wolf did not devour him." "It is me," replied Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام.

Not only did Allāh grant Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام complete cure, but He

also restored the youth of his wife. Thereafter, she bore 26 sons. "Fat'hul Bāri" has also reported that Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام had two granaries. The one was used to store wheat, while the second was used to store barley. Allāh sent a cloud, which showered so much gold in the wheat granary, that the gold began to flow. Allāh then sent another cloud, which showered silver in the barley granary. All praise be to Allāh for His bounties.

وَاذْكُرْ عِبَادَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ أُولِي الْأَيْدِي وَالْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٥﴾ إِنَّا أَخْلَصْنَاهُمْ بِخَالِصَةٍ
ذِكْرَى الدَّارِ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ عِنْدَنَا لَمِنَ الْمُصْطَفَيْنَ الْأَخْيَارِ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَاذْكُرْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ
وَالْيَسَعَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ وَكُلٌّ مِنَ الْأَخْيَارِ ﴿٤٨﴾ هَٰذَا ذِكْرٌ وَإِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ لَحُسْنَ مَآبٍ ﴿٤٩﴾
جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ مُفَتَّحَةً لَهُمُ الْأَبْوَابُ ﴿٥٠﴾ مُتَّكِئِينَ فِيهَا يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَشَرَابٍ
﴿٥١﴾ ۞ وَعِنْدَهُمْ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ أَتْرَابٌ ﴿٥٢﴾ هَٰذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٥٣﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَا
لَرِزْقُنَا مَا لَهُ مِنْ نَفَادٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

(45) Call to mind Our slaves Ibrahīm, Is'hāq and Ya'qūb, who were men with hands and intelligence. (46) We have selected them for the speciality of remembering the Hereafter. (47) Undoubtedly, they are from among the chosen best in Our estimation. (48) Call to mind Isma'īl, Yasa and Dhul Kifl. They were all from the very best. (49) This is an Advice. Without doubt, the abstinent will have a pleasant abode... (50) .... the eternal gardens of Jannah (paradise), with the doors opened for them. (51) They will recline there, asking for the abundance of fruit and drinks. (52) They shall have with them wives with eyes downcast, and of the same age. (53) This is what you have been promised for the Day of Reckoning. (54) Indeed, this is Our provision, which will never terminate.

MENTION OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM, IS'HĀQ, AND YA'QŪB عليه السلام

These verses commence with the mention of certain Prophets عليهم السلام, after which mention is made of the bounties of paradise.

Allāh says, *"Call to mind Our slaves Ibrahīm,* (his son) *Is'hāq and* (his son) *Ya'qūb..."* The Qur'ān often speaks of these great Prophets عليهم السلام. Mention has already been made of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, who endured many hardships while propagating the message of oneness of Allāh. He was cast into a huge fire, debated with the polytheists, and was even commanded to slaughter his son, Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. He built the Ka'ba with Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام and made the announcement for Hajj. He also made the supplication, *"O our Lord! Send among them (the people of Makkah) a messenger from their midst who will recite Your verses to them, teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Without doubt, You are the Mighty, the Wise."* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 129*]

Surah Baqarah, Surah Nahl and Surah Hajj have already mentioned the command to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah to follow the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was the forefather of all the Prophets عليهم السلام after him.

Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was from the progeny of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام, while the other Prophet عليه السلام were all from the progeny of the other son, Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام. Both these sons were given to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام after he had already aged. In gratitude, he made the following supplication: *"All praise be to Allāh, Who has gifted me with Isma'īl and Is'hāq despite old age. Undoubtedly, my Lord hears all prayers."* [*Surah Ibrahīm (14), verse 39*]

Describing these Prophets عليهم السلام, Allāh says that they *"were men with hands and intelligence."* Commentators interpret this to mean that Allāh had granted these Prophets عليهم السلام the strength to obey Him, worship Him, and to have foresight and a deep understanding of religion. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

Allāh describes them further when He says, *"We have selected them for the speciality of remembering the Hereafter."* These illustrious men were devoted to the concern for the Hereafter. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه narrates the following interpretation of this verse from Sayyidina Mālik bin Dinār رحمة الله عليه. He said, "Allāh has removed love for the world and its remembrance from the hearts of these Prophets عليهم السلام, replacing it with love for the Hereafter and remembrance of it."

Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه has interpreted the verse thus: "These Prophet عليه السلام used to remind people of the Hereafter and encourage them to prepare for the Hereafter."

Describing a third attribute of these Prophets عليهم السلام, Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, they are from among the chosen best in Our estimation.* What more can be said in their praise?

Thereafter, Allāh speaks of other Prophets عليهم السلام, when He says, *"Call to mind Isma'īl, Yasa and Dhul Kifl. They were all from the very best."* Mention was made of these Prophets عليهم السلام in Surah An'ām [*Surah 6, verse 86*] and in Surah Anbiya [*Surah 21, verse 85*]. Allāh says, *"This is an Advice* (which should be acted upon)."

THE BOUNTIES THAT THOSE WHO ABSTAIN WILL ENJOY

"Without doubt, the abstinent will have a pleasant abode." Allāh describes the *"pleasant abode"* as *"the eternal gardens of Heaven, with the doors opened for them."* When people will be admitted into Heaven, they will find the doors open to welcome them. Allāh says in a verse of Surah Zumar, *"Those who feared their Lord will be led to Heaven in groups. Until, when they arrive there and its gates are opened .."* [*Surah 39, verse 73*]

Allāh then speaks of some of the comforts and food and drink that they will enjoy. Allāh says, *"They will recline there, asking for the abundance of fruit and drinks."* Describing their spouses in Heaven, Allāh says, *"They shall have with them wives with eyes downcast, and of the same age.* "These wives will have eyes only for their husbands.

The people of Heaven will then be told, "*This* (honour and bounties) *is what you have been promised for the Day of Reckoning. Indeed, this is Our provision, which will never terminate.*" Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verse 108*] also describes the provisions of Heaven as prizes that will never come to an end. Verse 21 of Surah Barā'ah (*Surah 9*) as well as verse 6 of Surah Tīn (*Surah 95*) describe the rewards of Heaven as being everlasting.

هَٰذَا ۚ وَإِنَّ لِلطَّٰغِينَ لَشَرَّ مَـَٔابٍ (55) جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا فَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ (56) هَٰذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ
حَمِيمٌ وَغَسَّاقٌ (57) وَءَاخَرُ مِن شَكْلِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجٌ (58) هَٰذَا فَوْجٌ مُّقْتَحِمٌ مَّعَكُمْ ۖ لَا مَرْحَبًۢا
بِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ صَالُوا۟ ٱلنَّارِ (59) قَالُوا۟ بَلْ أَنتُمْ لَا مَرْحَبًۢا بِكُمْ ۖ أَنتُمْ قَدَّمْتُمُوهُ لَنَا ۖ فَبِئْسَ ٱلْقَرَارُ
(60) قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا مَن قَدَّمَ لَنَا هَٰذَا فَزِدْهُ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا فِى ٱلنَّارِ (61) وَقَالُوا۟ مَا لَنَا لَا نَرَىٰ
رِجَالًا كُنَّا نَعُدُّهُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَشْرَارِ (62) أَتَّخَذْنَٰهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا أَمْ زَاغَتْ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ (63) إِنَّ
ذَٰلِكَ لَحَقٌّ تَخَاصُمُ أَهْلِ ٱلنَّارِ (64)

(55) This is it (so understand). As for the rebellious, there shall be the worst of abodes. (56) They shall have to enter Hell. What a terrible resting place indeed! (57) "This (is the punishment), so taste it! This is Hamīm and Ghassāq... (58) "...and a multitude of other punishments of its kind." (59) "This is an army to be entered with you. There is no welcome for them. They shall certainly be entered into the Fire." (60) They will say, "No! You are the ones for whom there is no welcome! You people have brought this on us. What a horrible station it is!" (61) They will cry out, "O our Lord! Double the punishment in the Fire for those who have brought this on us." (62) They will say, "Why do we not see those men whom we regarded as contemptible?" (63) "Did we make fun of them, or have our eyes failed to perceive them?" (64) This is certainly the truth, the dispute of the people of the Fire.

THE EVIL OUTCOME OF THE REBELLIOUS ONES, AND THEIR DISASSOCIATION FROM EACH OTHER IN HELL

After describing the favourable ending of the fortunate ones, Allāh says, "*This is it* (so understand)." Thereafter, Allāh describes the plight of the wretched ones, saying, "*As for the rebellious, there shall be the worst of abodes. They shall have to enter Hell. What a terrible resting place indeed!*" Hell is described as a terrible "*resting place*" because fire will be burning from beneath as well.

The people of Hell will be told, "*This* (is the punishment), *so taste it! This is Hamīm and Ghassāq, and a multitude of other punishments of its kind.*" Other forms of punishment are Darī, Zamharīr, Zaqqūm, Ghislīn, Sa'ūd, Maqāmi, etc. "Hamīm" is boiling water. Allāh says in Surah Muhammad that the people of Hell will be "*given boiling water to drink, which tears their innards to shreds?*" [*Surah 47, verse 15*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that if a single bucket of "*Ghassāq*" was

thrown on earth, every person on earth will rot. [*"Mishkāt" p. 503*]

The book "Mirqāt" (which is a commentary of "Mishkāt") has cited the following four interpretations of *"Ghassāq"*:

1. It is the puss of the people of Hell, and the fluid that remains after their wounds are washed.
2. It is the tears of the people in Hell.
3. It refers to Zamharīr, which is the icy cold part of Hell.
4. It is the frozen, decaying puss of the people in Hell, which is too cold to drink. (However, people will be forced to drink it because of extreme hunger).

Whatever the interpretation, *"Ghassāq"* is something extremely horrid and foul smelling. May Allāh save us all from it. Āmīn.

Thereafter, Allāh describes a conversation between the people of Hell. Since many groups will be entered in succession, those who entered first will tell each other as they watch the others entering, *"This is an army to be entered with you. There is no welcome for them. They shall certainly be entered into the Fire* (just as we have been. We can therefore expect no assistance from them)."

Hearing this comment, the incoming group will say, *"No! You are the ones for whom there is no welcome! You people have brought this on us (by misleading us to perpetrate disbelief). What a horrible station it is!"*

These incoming groups will then plead to Allāh saying, *"O our Lord! Double the punishment in the Fire for those who have brought this on us."* Whereas the followers duly comply with the dictates of their leaders in this world, they will curse them in the Hereafter, asking Allāh to double their punishment.

THE PEOPLE OF HELL WILL BE SURPRISED NOT TO FIND THE PEOPLE OF BELIEF WITH THEM

Referring to the poor believers, the people of Hell will say, *"Why do we not see those men whom we regarded as contemptible?"*

The disbelievers (like the Jews, Christians, and Hindus) often tell the believers, "You carry on to Hell. We shall be in Heaven." Eventually, when the disbelievers find themselves in Hell. They will look around for the believers. When they see only other disbelievers like themselves, they will ask, *"Why do we not see those men whom we regarded as contemptible?"*

"Did we make fun of them (by deeming them to be inmates of Hell, whereas they were really inheritors of Heaven), *or have our eyes failed to perceive them* (here in Hell)?" They will then regret that they made fun of the believers. The ugly reality will now dawn upon them that the believers reached Heaven, while they will have to suffer the torments of Hell forever.

Allāh then asserts, *"This is certainly the truth, the dispute of the people of the Fire."*

(65) Say, "I am but a warner, and there is none worthy of worship except Allāh, the One, the Omnipotent." (66) "He is the Lord of the heavens, the earth, and whatever is between the two. He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving." (67) Say, "This is a vital message." (68) "...to which you people are averse." (69) "I have no knowledge of lofty chiefs (angels) when they discuss." (70) "The revelation sent to me is that I am only a clear warner."

ONLY ALLĀH IS WORTHY OF WORSHIP HE IS THE ONE, THE OMNIPOTENT, MASTER OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, THE MIGHTY, AND THE MOST FORGIVING

These verses confirm oneness of Allāh, Risālah (*prophehthood*), and five attributes of Allah. Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "*Say* (to the masses), '*I am but a warner* (I will not force anyone to believe), *and there is none worthy of worship except Allāh,* (1) *the One,* (2) *the Omnipotent.*" Allāh has supreme control over the universe, and everything happens only by His decree.

Furthermore, "*He is* (3) *the Lord of the heavens, the earth, and whatever is between the two.*" It is therefore sheer foolishness to worship any other being. It should also be understood that "*He is (4) the Mighty* ", meaning that Allāh possesses the power and might to ensure that people are accountable for the evil they perpetrate. However, if they choose to repent, then Allāh is also *(5) "the Most Forgiving."*

After mentioning Allāh's five attributes, Allāh makes mention of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "*Say, 'This* (news that I have brought to you about my apostleship) *is a vital message to which you people are averse.*"

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell the people, "*I have no* (way to access the) *knowledge of lofty chiefs* (the angels) *when they discuss.* (Therefore, how am I able to inform of the things I tell you?)" Whereas the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had no association with the Ahlul Kitāb (*people of book*), from whom he could have gleaned the knowledge of bygone nations, he was able to give accurate accounts of past events. It is obvious that the only source of this knowledge is divine revelation.

If it were not for divine revelation, a human being would not be able to inform others about incidents like the creation of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, and the fact that Iblīs refused to prostrate to him. The discussion between Allāh and the angels (as mentioned in Surah Baqarah) concerned the creation of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, when Allāh told the angels, "*I am about to place a viceroy on earth.*" Thereafter, the angels asked certain questions, which Allāh answered by demonstrating to them that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was superior in knowledge

to them. It was then that they admitted to Allāh, *"We proclaim Your purity! We possess only the knowledge that You have given to us. Without doubt, You are the All Knowing, the Wise."*

The fact 'that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was able to relate such incidents to the people proves that he received divine revelation. Asserting his Prophet hood, Allāh also commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell the people, *"The revelation sent to me is that I am only a clear warner."* This makes it clear that the duty of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to convey the message. He was not charged to force people to believe.

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّي خَٰلِقٌۢ بَشَرًا مِّن طِينٍ (71) فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُۥ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي
فَقَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ سَٰجِدِينَ (72) فَسَجَدَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ (73) إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ ٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ
مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ (74) قَالَ يَٰٓإِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِيَدَىَّ ۖ أَسْتَكْبَرْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ
مِنَ ٱلْعَالِينَ (75) قَالَ أَنَا۠ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ ۖ خَلَقْتَنِي مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُۥ مِن طِينٍ (76) قَالَ فَٱخْرُجْ مِنْهَا
فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ (77) وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ لَعْنَتِىٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ (78) قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنظِرْنِىٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ
(79) قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنظَرِينَ (80) إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْوَقْتِ ٱلْمَعْلُومِ (81) قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ
لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (82) إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ (83) قَالَ فَٱلْحَقُّ وَٱلْحَقَّ أَقُولُ
(84) لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنكَ وَمِمَّن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (85)

(71) When your Lord said to the angels, "Verily, I am creating a human being from clay." (72) "So, when I have perfected him and blown My spirit into him, then every one of you should fall prostrate to him." (73) So every one of the angels prostrated to him... (74) except for Iblīs (Chief Devil). He was haughty, and was from among the disbelievers. (75) Allāh said, "O Iblīs (Chief Devil)! What has prevented you from prostrating to what I have created with My own hands? Are you too proud, or are you superior in rank?" (76) Iblīs (Chief Devil) replied, "I am better than he. You have created me from fire, while you have created him from clay." (77) Allāh said, Depart from here, for you are certainly outcast." (78) "My curse shall be on you until the Day of Reckoning." (79) Iblīs said, "O my Lord! Grant me respite until the Day when people are resurrected." (80) Allāh said, "You are then from those given respite..." (81) "... until the Day of the appointed time." (82) Iblīs (Chief Devil) said, "By Your honour! I shall definitely mislead all of them..." (83) "...except Your chosen slaves among them." (84) Allāh declared, "I speak the truth, and it is the truth that I always speak..." (85) "... I shall certainly fill Hell with you and all those of them who follow you."

THE DISOBEDIENCE AND PRIDE OF IBLĪS (CHIEF DEVIL) WHO REFUSES TO PROSTRATE TO SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام

This subject matter of Sayyidina Ādam's عليه السلام creation and the refusal of Iblīs (Chief Devil) to prostrate, has been related in Surah Baqarah [*Surah 2, verses 30-39*], Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 11-25*], Surah Hijr [*Surah 15, verses 26-44*], and Surah Isrā [*Surah 17, verses 61-65*]. Refer to these commentaries for the details.

When Allāh intended to create Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, he said to the angels, *"Verily, I am creating a human being from clay. So, when I have perfected him and blown My spirit into him, then every one of you should fall prostrate to him."*

Allāh used the word *"bashar"* to refer to a human being. Literally, the word *"bashar"* refers to something having skin that is not covered with hair. Animals also have skin, but their skin is covered with hair. Besides the head and the chin of men, the rest of the human's body is free of thick hair. Wherever else such hair grows, the Shari'ah has instructed that it be removed. Of course, it is compulsory for men to grow the beard. However, when people return to Heaven, men will not have beards, thereby fully expressing their nature as *"basher (Human)"*.

The above verse states that man was created from clay, whereas Surah Hijr states that he was created from *"melodious sand derived from dark decomposing clay."* In Surah Rahmān Allāh says that He *"created man from melodious sand that resembles potter's clay"*. Surah An'ām says that man was made from clay.

The fact is that all these verses describe the various stages of man's creation. Initially, sand was gathered from various parts of the earth. Water was then mixed with this sand, turning it into clay. Then this clay was left until it began to decompose and become dark in colour. Thereafter the mould of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was cast with this. When the mould set and dried, it became like pottery clay that has a melodious sound when struck (as is the case with any clay pot). The various verses of the Qur'ān individually refer to these various stages in man's creation.

According to Allāh's command, *"every one of the angels fell prostrate to him* [Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام]." Iblīs was also among the angels when the command was issued. However, he failed to comply. Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"He was from the Jinn and disobeyed the command of his Lord."* A verse of Surah Baqarah reads: *"He refused, was haughty, and was from among the disbelievers."*

When Iblīs refused to prostrate, Allāh asked, *"What prevented you from prostrating when I commanded you?"* This verse proves that Iblīs was also commanded to prostrate to Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. In the above verse of Surah Sād, Allāh says, *"Allāh said, 'O Iblīs (Chief Devil)! What has prevented you from prostrating to what I have created with My own hands? Are you too proud, or are you superior in rank?'"* Scholars have mentioned that *"My own hands"* has a metaphorical interpretation because Allāh is not dependent on physical limbs. Whenever importance is attached to something, a person will say that he made it with his own hands. Similarly, this is the interpretation of the verse.

However, others have mentioned that it is inappropriate to tender a metaphorical interpretation. They maintain that the interpretation of *'My own*

hands" refers to whatever Allāh intends, as is most befitting for His status. It is merely our duty to believe.

This is the same interpretation given for the phrase *"blown My spirit into him."* They say that Allāh knows best the interpretation of it, and that we should merely believe in it. However, other Scholars have stated that the phrase refers to instilling a soul into Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام.

After Allāh reprimanded Iblīs in this manner, *"Iblīs (Chief Devil) replied, 'I am better than him. You have created me from fire, while you have created him from clay.'"* He therefore contended that it was below his dignity to prostrate to Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام.

"Allāh said, 'Depart from here, for you are certainly outcast. My curse shall be on you until the Day of Reckoning.'" Of course, someone who is accursed until the Judgment day will certainly be accursed after that as well.

Iblīs (*Chief Devil*) was overcome with pride. He accepted being accursed, but could not overcome his pride to ask for forgiveness. Instead, he asked for an extended lease of life. He said, *"O my Lord! Grant me respite until the Day when people are resurrected."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" states that his request was to remain alive until the time that the trumpet is sounded for the second time. He therefore tried to escape death. *"Allāh said, 'You are then from those given respite until the Day of the appointed time.*

It was then that Iblīs (*Chief Devil*) disclosed what his heart concealed. *"Iblīs said, 'By Your honour! I shall definitely mislead all of them; except Your chosen slaves among them."* He took an oath to mislead people by making vice appear to be virtue. Of course, he realised that he could have no effect on those whom Allāh has selected for His obedience. Since he was accursed for not prostrating to Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, Iblīs (*Chief Devil*) took this oath because he wanted to take revenge against Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and his progeny. This was extremely foolish of Iblīs (*Chief Devil*) because it was his own doing that brought the curse on himself, when he disobeyed Allāh's command.

Allāh intended that man be tested in this world. Therefore, he granted Iblīs the reprieve he requested, and gave him the opportunity to mislead mankind. However, Allāh also warned man that Iblīs (*Chief Devil*) and his army will attempt to mislead them at every step. Allāh sent His Prophets عليهم السلام to the world to show man what is right and what is wrong. Allāh also sent His divine scriptures for man's guidance. Thereafter, Allāh also arranged the system of the Caliphs, who continued to propagate the message to mankind. Therefore, whoever is heedless of these warnings and falls prey to the deception of Iblīs (*Chief Devil*) shall assume full responsibility for his deeds.

HELL WILL BE FILLED WITH IBLĪS AND HIS FOLLOWERS

After Iblīs (*Chief Devil*) took an oath to mislead mankind, *"Allāh declared, 'I speak the truth, and it is the truth that I always speak. I shall certainly fill Hell with you and all those of them who follow you.'"*

When Allāh sent Sayyidina Ādam and Hawwā عليهما السلام to earth, He also declared, "If there ever comes to you any guidance from Me, then whoever will

follow My guidance shall have no fear on them, neither shall they grieve. Those who disbelieve and falsify shall be the dwellers of the Fire, where they will abide forever." [*Surah Baqarah (2), verses 38 and 39*]

NOTE : When Iblīs (*Chief Devil*) said, *"O my Lord! Grant me respite until the Day when people are resurrected,"* Allāh told him, *"You are then from those given respite until the Day of the appointed time."* Only Allāh knows exactly when this *"Day of the appointed time"* shall take place. When Allāh decrees that Iblīs should die, he will die as a disbeliever, after which he will be condemned to Hell.

(86) Say, "I do not ask you people for any payment for this, and I am not among those who pretend." (87) This is but Advice for the universe. (88) You will surely become aware of the reality after a while.

THERE IS NO PAYMENT FOR PROPAGATING THE TRUTH

People falsified the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he invited them to believe and recited the Qur'ān to them. They refused to accept the truth even though he performed miracles for them. Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to invite them in a different manner. Allāh says, *"Say* [to them, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم], *'I do not ask you for any payment for this..."* *i.e.* I do not ask you for anything in return for the message of that Qur'ān that I recite to you. Therefore, people should ponder about why a person would exert himself so greatly to propagate something for which he stands to earn no material gain. This should lead people to accept the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم must be commanded by Allāh to continue his mission.

Allāh also instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell the people, *"and I am not among those who pretend." i.e.* I am not one of those who would lay a false claim to Prophethood, neither would I claim that the Qur'ān is from Allāh if it was not. Indeed, the Qur'ān is from Allāh, and it is *'Advice for the* (inhabitants of the) *universe."* Therefore, accept the Qur'ān as the truth before death.

"You people will surely become aware of the reality (that the Qur'ān is the truth from Allāh) *after a while* (when you die)." However, then it will be too late. Other commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that the polytheists will come to learn the error of their ways when the Battle of Badr takes place.

NOTE : The verse *"I do not ask you for any payment for this,"* is a message to all preachers that their efforts must be done solely for Allāh, without any payment from people. When preaching, they should not hope to receive anything from the people.

"...and I am not among those who pretend." This verse teaches Muslims, moreso Muslim preachers, that they should never pretend. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin

Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه said, "O people! Whoever knows something should express it. Whoever does not know something should say, 'Allāh knows best.' (i.e. He should not pretend that he knows, because this will entail lying). If you do not know something, admit it and say, 'Allāh knows best'. This is also knowledge. Allāh has commanded His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Say, 'I do not ask you for any payment for this, and I am not among those who pretend." [*Bukhari, v.2 p.7 10*]

There are many people who have no knowledge, yet assume the title of *Mufti,* Maulana or Ālimuddīn. When they are asked about any religious ruling or hadith, they deem it below their dignity to admit their ignorance on the matter. They then say whatever occurs to them. The above verse is a caution to such people. Muslims should stay away from matters that are far from the truth, or have little bearing on reality.

A woman once told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that she was a co-wife, and asked whether she could tell her husband's other wife that her husband had given her certain things, which he did not. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "The person who falsely claims that he/she was given something is like a person who dons clothing of lies." [*"Mishkāt" p. 281, from Bukhari and Muslim*]

سورة الزمر

Makkan	Surah Zumar	Verses 75

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

تَنزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿1﴾ إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَّهُ الدِّينَ ﴿2﴾ أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿3﴾ لَّوْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ أَن يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا لَّاصْطَفَىٰ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ ۖ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿4﴾ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ۖ يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۖ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ أَلَا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ ﴿5﴾ خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ الْأَنْعَامِ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَزْوَاجٍ ۚ يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّن بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۖ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُصْرَفُونَ ﴿6﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) This is a revealed book from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise. (2) Undoubtedly, We have revealed the Book to you with the truth, so worship Allāh, making religion exclusively His. (3) Behold! Religion is purely for Allāh. Those people who take others as partners of Allāh say, "We worship them only so that they may draw us close to Allāh. Verily Allāh shall decide between them with regard to the matters in which they differ. Undoubtedly, Allāh does not guide the one who is a liar and a disbeliever. (4) If Allāh intended to take a son, He would have chosen whatever He desires from His creation. He is Pure, and He is the

One, the Omnipotent. (5) He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth. He folds the night into the day, folds the day into the night, and has subjugated the sun and the moon. Each one runs to a prescribed term. Behold! He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving. (6) He has created you from a single soul, after which He made a spouse from the soul, and also made eight pairs for you from the (domestic) animals. Allāh creates you in the wombs of your mothers, as a creation after a creation in three darknesses. That is Allāh, your Lord, to Whom all Kingdoms belong. There is none worthy of worship besides Him. So where are you turning to?

ALLĀH IS ONE, MIGHTY AND OMNIPOTENT, WHO HAS SUBJUGATED THE SUN AND THE MOON, AND CREATED MAN IN THREE LAYERS OF DARKNESS

These opening verses of Surah Zumar discuss the revelation of the Qur'ān, establishes oneness of Allāh and refutes polytheism. These verses also describe Allāh's majestic creative power.

Allāh begins by saying, *"This is a revealed book from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise."* Thereafter, Allāh changes the mode of address when He addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم directly saying, *"Undoubtedly, We have revealed the Book to you with the truth, so worship Allāh, making religion (beliefs) exclusively His."* Although the verse appears to address the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is intended for the whole of mankind. Since it is compulsory for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to adhere to oneness of Allāh, it will also be necessary for others to hold the same belief. Allāh then declares, *"Behold! Religion is purely for Allāh."* This indicates that it is imperative that every person subscribes to the belief of oneness of Allāh.

Allāh then addresses a false notion of the Polytheists. Allāh says, *"Those people who take others as partners to Allāh say, 'We worship them only so that they may draw us close to Allāh."* These people contend that the partners they ascribe to Allāh will present their acts of worship in Allāh's court, or will at least intercede on their behalf before Allāh, so that their needs are fulfilled.

The fact is that Satan is a master at misleading people. When the Prophets عليهم السلام and others condemned polytheist, their discourses started to make an impact upon the minds of the polytheists. To maintain polytheist among the people, Satan made them believe that their worship of other beings was not contrary to oneness of Allāh. He told them that this was rather another form of oneness of Allāh because it was not possible to reach Allāh without the agency of Allāh's chosen servants. These chosen servants of Allāh, because of their proximity to Allāh, were able to intercede on behalf of others. Therefore, he impressed upon their minds that worshipping others, because it was useful in securing Allāh's proximity, was part of worshipping Allāh. He told them that the ministers in royal courts are a necessary link to reach the attention of worldly kings. Therefore, he said, it is even more necessary that links are sought to reach the divine presence of Allāh.

When Satan had convinced the misguided people about the truth of his 'preaching', they always had a ready reply for anyone who highlighted the

abomination of polytheist to them. They simply said, *"We worship them only so that they may draw us close to Allāh."* Today's grave worshippers, who prostrate to the graves of saints, give the same reply.

"Verily Allāh shall decide between them with regard to the matters in which they differ." This decision will be taken on the Judgment day when the disbelievers and polytheists will be condemned to Hell, while the believers will be admitted into Heaven.

"Undoubtedly, Allāh does not guide the one who is a liar and a disbeliever." There are two types of guidance. The first type, which entails pointing out the right path to people, is meant for all mankind. However, the second type, which is to take a person by the hand and help him reach the destination, will not be granted to people who are obstinate in their disbelief and who are adamant not to seek the truth.

Thereafter, Allāh addresses those people who say that Allāh has children. Allāh says, *"If Allāh intended to take a son, He would have chosen whatever He desires from His creation."* However, taking a son implies a defect in Allāh (Allāh forbid!) whereas *"He is Pure from all defects)"*. Allāh has no children, and *"He is the One, the Omnipotent."*

Allāh fulfils the needs of all creation, and does not require any assistance at all. People require children to assist them in times of need and during old age. Allāh is Eternal, Independent, and His attributes will never change. There can be none equal to Him or like Him in any way. It is therefore illogical to assume that any being can be His child.

Allāh then speaks of His tremendous creative powers when He says, *"He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth. He folds the night into the day, folds the day into the night, and has subjugated the sun and the moon. Each one runs to a prescribed term. Behold! He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving."* Allāh has charged the sun and the moon to carry out specific tasks. They will duly carry out their specific tasks until the time that Allāh ordains their end. None can act contrary to what Allāh has predestined because He is Mighty and cannot be overpowered. Of course, if any disbeliever chooses to repent and believe, Allāh is also the Most Forgiving and will certainly pardon.

Allāh says further, *"He has created you from a single soul* [Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام], *after which He made a spouse from the soul..."* Allāh has created all of mankind from Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, from whose left rib Allāh created his spouse, Sayyidah Hawwā عليها السلام. It is from their union that Allāh has allowed billions of people to flourish on earth.

Allāh has *"also made eight pairs for you from the (domestic) animals."* These eight refer to the pairs (male and female) of cows, camels, goats and sheep. These eight pairs have been mentioned in verses 143 and 144 of Surah Ān'ām (*Surah 6*).

"Allāh creates you in the wombs of your mothers, as a creation after a creation in three darknesses." The creation of man in the womb of his mother is a gradual process of several stages. After conception, the process begins with a clot of blood, followed by a lump of flesh, after which bones are formed, which are eventually dressed in muscle, tissue and skin. The *"three darknesses"* refer to the

belly, the womb, and (thirdly) the membrane in which the foetus develops.

All the above are demonstrations of Allāh's power and might, which should lead man to perceive that only Allāh is the Creator and Master of the universe. Allāh then declares, *"That is Allāh, your Lord, to Whom all Kingdoms belong. There is none worthy of worship besides Him. So where are you turning?"* After realising that Allāh created people perfectly within three layers of darkness, man should be convinced that He is that Omnipotent Being Who deserves to be worshipped. Worshipping others despite having this knowledge is sheer foolishness.

إِن تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنكُمْ ۖ وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ ۖ وَإِن تَشْكُرُوا يَرْضَهُ لَكُمْ ۗ
وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۗ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۚ
إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ (7)

(7) If you disbelieve, then Allāh is certainly Independent of you. Allāh is not pleased with disbelief for His slaves. If you are grateful, then this is what pleases Him. None shall bear the burden of another's sins. Thereafter, your return shall be to your Lord, Who will inform you of what you used to do. Verily, He has knowledge of the secrets of the heart.

ALLĀH IS INDEPENDENT, DISLIKES DISBELIEF AND LIKES GRATITUDE

After calling towards oneness of Allāh and highlighting the abomination of polytheism, Allāh dispels a doubt which may creep into people's minds. People may be led to think that Allāh is in need of them believing in oneness of Allāh, or that Allāh needs their worship. Allāh declares in the above verse that He is Independent of people, and He will not be harmed in any way if they choose to disbelieve.

However, this does not mean that Allāh will be pleased with people for adopting disbelief. Allāh will punish people for disbelief, while others will benefit greatly by being grateful to Allāh and sincerely believing in oneness of Allāh.

Allāh then tells the disbelievers that they should not be fooled into thinking that their leaders will suffer the punishment of disbelief on their behalf just because it was these leaders that led them to disbelief. Allāh declares, *'None shall bear the burden of another's sins."* Every person will have to suffer the eternal punishment for the disbelief that s/he perpetrates.

No person should ever think that he will not have to answer for his sins. None should also think that his deeds will not be presented in the Hereafter because they disappear after being committed. Such people should bear in mind that Allāh has knowledge of everything. Not only is He aware of those actions that are visible, but He is also perfectly Aware of the secrets that people hide in their hearts. On the Day of Judgment Allāh will remind people of the deeds that

they carried out in this world. Therefore, people should endeavour to carry out the best deeds after becoming believers.

۞ وَإِذَا مَسَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ضُرٌّ دَعَا رَبَّهُۥ مُنِيبًا إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا خَوَّلَهُۥ نِعْمَةً مِّنْهُ نَسِيَ مَا كَانَ
يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ مِن قَبْلُ وَجَعَلَ لِلَّهِ أَندَادًا لِّيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۚ قُلْ تَمَتَّعْ بِكُفْرِكَ قَلِيلًا ۖ إِنَّكَ
مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٨﴾ أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَٰنِتٌ ءَانَآءَ ٱلَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَآئِمًا يَحْذَرُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ
وَيَرْجُوا۟ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِۦ ۗ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِى ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُو۟لُوا۟
ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٩﴾

(8) When any adversity afflicts man, he supplicates to Allāh, turning to Him only. Then, when Allāh confers a bounty upon him, he forgets for what he supplicated to Allāh before. He then ascribes partners to Allāh, thereby misleading (others) from Allāh 's path. Say, "Enjoy your disbelief for a while! You will certainly be from the inmates of the Fire." (9) Or the person who is engrossed in worship throughout the hours of the night, prostrating and standing, fearing the Hereafter and aspiring for the mercy of his Lord? Say, "Can those with knowledge be equal to those who do not have knowledge? Only those with intelligence will take heed."

MAN PRAYS TO ALLĀH FOR ASSISTANCE WHEN IN DIFFICULTY, BUT FORGETS TO SUPPLICATE WHEN IN COMFORT AND PROSPERITY

Allāh says, *"When any adversity afflicts man, he supplicates to Allāh, turning to Him only (forgetting all his gods, knowing that they are helpless). Then, when Allāh confers a bounty upon him, he forgets for what he supplicated to Allāh before. (In addition to this) He then ascribes partners to Allāh, thereby misleading (others) from Allāh 's path."*

Allāh says in Surah Ankabūt, *"When they board a ship they supplicate to Allāh with sincere belief in Him. But when He rescues them to land, they again begin to ascribe partners to Him. To show in gratitude for the things We gave them and to enjoy. Soon they will come to know."* [*Surah 29, verses 65,66*]

Allāh declares, *"Say* [to them, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم], *'Enjoy your disbelief for a while! You will certainly be from the inmates of the Fire."* This verse is addressed to those people who adamantly adhere to disbelief because they fear the loss of some material wealth, some position or their friends if they were to accept Islām. These people fail to realise that the material gains of this world cannot be compared to the eternal punishment of the Hereafter.

The punishment of Hell is not small issue. None will be prepared to endure the fire of this world for even five minutes in exchange for a kingdom. It is therefore extremely surprising that anyone can be prepared to endure the more intense fire of Hell for the trivial gains of this world! These gains are nothing,

even though they appear to be immense.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE PIOUS

"Or the person who is engrossed in worship throughout the hours of the night, prostrating (at times) and standing (at times), fearing the Hereafter and aspiring for the mercy of his Lord (Can such person be equal to one who is a disbeliever and a sinner)? Say, 'Can those with knowledge be equal to those who do not have knowledge? Only those with intelligence will take heed." It is obvious that a believer with the above attributes cannot be compared to a sinful disbeliever. The purport of this verse is similar a verse of Surah Sād, where Allāh states, *"Should We make those who believe and do righteous deeds like those who spread corruption on earth? Should We make the pious ones like the sinners?"* [*Surah 38, verse 28*]

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"Say, 'Can those with knowledge be equal to those who do not have knowledge?"* This verse makes it clear that those people whose knowledge has guided them to belief and who carry out good deeds cannot be compared to people who are ignorant of oneness of Allāh. The two groups of people cannot be equal because the people of knowledge will enter Heaven on the Judgment day, whereas the ignorant will be doomed to Hell.

"Only those with intelligence will take heed." People without intelligence, as well as those who do not utilise their intelligence, will be unable to heed the advice given to them. There are many people today who are regarded to be intelligent because of the inventions they have developed, and the scientific theories that they have postulated. However, they have not recognised Allāh. Many of them refute Allāh's existence (atheists), while others ascribe partners to Him (polytheists). The intelligence of such people is wasted. Any 'intelligence' that leads a person to Hell is useless.

THE VIRTUE OF TAHAJJUD SALĀH (*SUPEREROGATORY PRAYER*)

The above verse makes reference to the virtue of the Tahajjud Salāh (*supererogatory prayer*). Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The best Salāh after the Fardh Salāhs (*obligatory prayers*) is that Salāh which is performed during the middle of the night." [*"Mishkāt" p. 110*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "The most honourable people of my Ummah are those who are bearers of the Qur'ān and who perform Salāh during the night." [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Mughiera رضى الله عنه narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would exert himself so much in his nightly worship that his feet used to swell. When he was asked why he exerted himself so when all his past and future sins were forgiven, he would reply, "Should I then not be a grateful servant? i.e. It is necessary that I exert myself even more in gratitude." [*Bukhari v.1 p. 152*]

".... .fearing the Hereafter and aspiring for the mercy of his Lord?" This phrase teaches us that a believer should combine the qualities of fear and hope. Describing certain Prophets عليهم السلام, Allāh says, *"Verily, they would hasten to perform good deeds and supplicated to Us in anticipation and fear."* [*Surah Anbiya (21),*

verse 90]

A verse of Surah Sajdah reads, *"Their sides part from their beds, they supplicate to their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend from what We have provided for them."* [*Surah 32, verse 16*]

These verses make it clear that a person should continue to make supplication to Allāh and hope for His mercy and benevolence. However, he should also fear Allāh at all times. It is foolish for a person to merely entertain hopes that Allāh will be merciful towards him without carrying out good deeds.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once came to see a young Sahabi (*companion*) رضى الله عنه who was on his deathbed. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him, "How do you feel?" He replied, "I have hope in Allāh, yet I fear to be taken to task on account of my sins." Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "At this time (of death), whoever finds these two emotions in his heart, Allāh will certainly fulfil his hopes and save him from what he fears." [*"Mishkāt" p. 140*]

قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۗ وَأَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةٌ ۗ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (10) قُلْ إِنِّىٓ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَّهُ ٱلدِّينَ (11) وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ (12) قُلْ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّى عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (13) قُلِ ٱللَّهَ أَعْبُدُ مُخْلِصًا لَّهُۥ دِينِى (14) فَٱعْبُدُوا۟ مَا شِئْتُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ أَلَا ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْخُسْرَانُ ٱلْمُبِينُ (15) لَهُم مِّن فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ وَمِن تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ عِبَادَهُۥ ۚ يَٰعِبَادِ فَٱتَّقُونِ (16) وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱجْتَنَبُوا۟ ٱلطَّٰغُوتَ أَن يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ لَهُمُ ٱلْبُشْرَىٰ ۚ فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ (17) ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ ٱلْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَدَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمْ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ (18) أَفَمَنْ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ كَلِمَةُ ٱلْعَذَابِ أَفَأَنتَ تُنقِذُ مَن فِى ٱلنَّارِ (19) لَٰكِنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ غُرَفٌ مِّن فَوْقِهَا غُرَفٌ مَّبْنِيَّةٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ لَا يُخْلِفُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمِيعَادَ (20) أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَسَلَكَهُۥ يَنَٰبِيعَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُ بِهِۦ زَرْعًا مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَىٰهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُۥ حُطَٰمًا ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ (21)

(10) Say, "O those slaves of Mine who have believed! Fear your Lord. There shall be a pleasant recompense in this world for those who do good. Allāh's earth is vast. The patient ones shall be granted their reward without reservation." (11) Say, "I have been commanded to worship Allāh, making all of worship solely for Him." (12) "And I have been commanded to be the first of believers." (13) Say, "I fear the punishment of a severe day if I disobey my Lord." (14) Say, "I worship Allāh only, making my worship solely for Him." (15) "So worship whatever you wish besides Him." Say, "Verily the losers are those who put themselves and their families at a loss on the Judgment day. Behold! That is the evident loss." (16) They shall have flames above them and flames beneath them. It is with these things that Allāh warns His bondsmen. O my bondsmen Fear Me! (17) There are glad tidings for those who refrain from worshipping Satan, and who turn to Allāh. So convey glad tidings to My bondsmen... (18) ... who listen intently to the speech and follow the best of it. These are the ones whom Allāh has guided, and these are the ones who possess intelligence. (19) Or the one against whom the decree for punishment has been passed? Can you rescue the one who is in the Fire? (20) However, those who fear their Lord shall have balconies with balconies built above these. Beneath these, there will be rivers flowing. Allāh has made this promise, and Allāh never breaches His promise. (21) Do you not see that Allāh sends rain from the sky, and then channels it in springs within the earth? Thereafter, He extracts crops of different colours with it. Then the crops wither away, and you will see it turn yellow, after which Allāh devastates it. There is certainly a reminder in this for people of intelligence.

THE COMMAND TO FEAR ALLĀH AND WORSHIP HIM EXCLUSIVELY

Allāh has commanded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make certain declarations in the above verses.

The first command is: *"Say, 'O those slaves of Mine who have believed! Fear your Lord.* "When a believer fears Allāh, he will be prompted to carry out good deeds and abstain from evil. He is reminded that *"There shall be a pleasant recompense in this world for those who do good. Allāh 's earth is vast."* Of course, as a person accumulates good deeds to his name, he will have to be steadfast and persevere so that these do not come to an end. This perseverance is never in vain, because Allāh says *"The patient ones shall be granted their reward without count."*

"Allāh's earth is vast." There are times when a believer finds it difficult, if not impossible to carry out the injunctions of Islām, and to implement the Shari'ah in his life because of the constraints of the country he lives in. This part of the verse encourages such believers to pick up the courage to migrate to such a country where Dīn (*religion*) is more practicable. He should overcome the natural love he bears for his homeland, and migrate to another place, where, Insha Allāh, Allāh will ease the way for him. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"He who migrates in Allāh's way shall find in the land an abundance of pastures and vastness."* [*Surah 4, verse 100*]

The second command issued to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is: "Say, 'I have been commanded to worship Allāh, making all of worship solely for Him. And I have been commanded to be the first of believers." The Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is the last Ummah to appear on earth. The first

believer of this Ummah was none other than the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself. Just as it is necessary for all Muslims to adhere to the Shari'ah of Islām, this was also necessary for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This declaration tells people that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not merely a preacher, but he was himself a believer and a servant of Allāh. He practised whatever he preached to others.

The third command issued in the above verses is: *"Say, 'I fear the punishment of a severe day if I disobey my Lord.* "The Prophets عليهم السلام were all sinless. This declaration is therefore hypothetical i.e. "If I were ever to sin, I would be fearful of the punishment of a severe day." If a sinless Prophet announces that he fears Allāh's punishment, how much more should a normal sinful person fear Allāh?

The fourth command issued to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is to *"Say. 'I worship Allāh only, making my worship solely for Him."* This is an invitation for the rest of mankind to follow suit.

"So worship whatever you wish besides Him." Those who refuse to worship Allāh may worship whatever thy wish but should prepare themselves to face the terrible consequences of eternal punishment in the Hereafter.

The fifth command issued is: *"Say, 'Verily the losers are those who put themselves and their families at a loss on the Judgment day (by adhering to disbelief and polytheism). Behold! That is the evident loss."* This will be loss of immeasurable proportions from which none will be able to escape. When the verdict of eternal punishment is passed against any person, there will be none to assist, not even one's family and followers whose patronage was so valued in this world. In fact, these people will curse and pinning the blame on each other. It is with reference to this state of total desolation that Allāh says, *"Behold! That is the evident loss."*

Allāh then proceeds to describe the punishment awaiting the wretched ones. Allāh says, *"They shall have flames above them and flames beneath them."* This verse describes the enveloping flames as canopies, because of their encompassing nature. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه says that this verse is similar in meaning to verse 41 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*), where Allāh says, *"They will have the bed of Hell and a canopy atop them. Thus do We punish the oppressors.*

The verse is also similar to verse 55 of Surah Ankabūt, where Allāh says, *"The day when the punishment will envelope them from above and from beneath their feet. It will then be said to them, 'Taste what you used to do.'"* [*Surah 29, verse 55*]

"It is with these things that Allāh warns His bondsmen. O my bondsmen! Fear Me (by abstaining from acts that will draw My wrath)!" Allāh then praises those who abstain from disbelief and polytheism when He says, *"There are glad tidings for those who refrain from worshipping Satan, and who turn to Allāh."*

The Arabic word "tāghūt" (translated above as *"Satan "*) refers to someone who is extremely evil and exceedingly rebellious and disobedient. This aptly fits the description of Satan whose sole objective is to mislead mankind. Satan appears in various hideous forms before the polytheists, who then make idols in their very forms. Allāh is pleased with those bondsmen of His who refrain from disbelief and all forms of polytheism, who turn to Him only. Such people will be

the inhabitants of Heaven.

Allāh says, *"So convey glad tidings to My bondsmen; those who listen intently to the speech* (Qur'ān) *and follow the best of it"* i.e. they practise those deeds that will earn them the most rewards, such as the Farā'idh (*obligatory*) and compulsory. From among the other categories of deeds, they also give preference to those deeds that earn the highest rewards.

With regard to these people, Allāh mentions further, *"These are the ones whom Allāh has guided, and these are the ones who possess intelligence."* Such people have sound intelligence, and do not blindly follow the misguided ways of their forefathers. They use their intelligence to realise that they should stay clear of disbelief and polytheism.

NOTE: "Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported the following incident in the commentary of the verse: *"There are glad tidings for those who refrain from worshipping Satan, and who turn to Allāh."*

When Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه accepted Islām, Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān bin Auf رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqqās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Zaid رضى الله عنه, and Sayyidina Zubayr bin Awwām رضى الله عنه approached him to confirm whether he accepted Islām. He replied in the affirmative and he advised them to follow suit. Thereupon, they all accepted Islām. It was on this occasion that Allāh revealed the above verse.

"Or the one against whom the decree for punishment has been passed? Can you rescue the one who is in the Fire?" This verse consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that punishment has been decreed for certain people because they insist on remaining as disbelievers. It is not the task of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to save them from Hell, because this is beyond his capability. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is therefore urged not to be grieved about their disbelief.

Thereafter, Allāh makes mention of the glad tidings that he promised earlier. Allāh says, *"However, those who fear their Lord shall have balconies with balconies built above these. Beneath these, there will be rivers flowing. Allāh has made this promise, and Allāh never breaches His promise."* Therefore, the pious should rest assured that they will surely receive what has been promised to them.

Among those who refuse to accept Islām, there are many who (despite knowing the truth) do not believe because they fear a loss in their material belongings and world status. Such people are prepared to jeopardise their welfare in the Hereafter in exchange of the measly gains of this world. Drawing their attention to the transitory nature of this world, Allāh says, *"Do you not see that Allāh sends rain from the sky, and then channels it in springs within the earth? Thereafter, He extracts crops of different colours with it. Then the crops wither away, and you will see it turn yellow, after which Allāh devastates it."*

The nature of this world is similar to the flourishing crops in the fields. For a short while, it remains attractive and sought-after. However, it ultimately withers away to be reduced to nothing. The entire universe will also be reduced to nothing when the trumpet will sounded on the Judgment day. People hanker after the wealth of this world, constructing fortified palaces and fortresses. They amass large amounts of money, run business empires, and aspire to high

positions. However, death is sure to overcome every person, thereby reducing all possessions and aspirations into the dust of oblivion.

Allāh declares in Surah Āl Imrān, *"The life of this world is but an object of deceit."* In hankering after the things of this world, people destroy their lives in the Hereafter. The vicissitudes of this world are ample lessons for people to learn from. Therefore, Allāh says, *"There is certainly a reminder therein for people of intelligence."* Instead of using their intelligence to learn lessons, people foolishly focus their minds on worldly progress.

Allāh declares in Surah Kahf, *"Coin for them the similitude of this worldly life as the rain that We send from the sky, by which the plants of the earth flourish. Thereafter they become debris, to be carried by the winds. Allāh always has control over everything."* [*Surah 18, verse 45*]

أَفَمَن شَرَحَ ٱللَّهُ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقَٰسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مِّن
ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿22﴾ ٱللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ ٱلْحَدِيثِ كِتَٰبًا مُّتَشَٰبِهًا
مَّثَانِىَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَىٰ
ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ يَهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِنْ هَادٍ
﴿23﴾ أَفَمَن يَتَّقِى بِوَجْهِهِۦ سُوٓءَ ٱلْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ وَقِيلَ لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ ذُوقُوا۟ مَا
كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿24﴾ كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَأَتَىٰهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا
يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿25﴾ فَأَذَاقَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْخِزْىَ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿26﴾ وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِى هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ
﴿27﴾ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِى عِوَجٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿28﴾ ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَّجُلًا فِيهِ
شُرَكَآءُ مُتَشَٰكِسُونَ وَرَجُلًا سَلَمًا لِّرَجُلٍ هَلْ يَسْتَوِيَانِ مَثَلًا ۚ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿29﴾ إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُونَ ﴿30﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ
تَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿31﴾

(22) Or the person whose heart Allāh has opened to Islām, because of which he is upon a light from his Lord? Destruction be for those whose hearts have hardened against Allāh's remembrance. These people are in manifest deviation.
(23) Allāh has revealed the most superb articulation: a Book with subject matter of similar import, which is oft-repeated. The bodies of those who fear their Lord shiver with it, after which their hearts and bodies soften to Allāh's remembrance. This is Allah's guidance, with which He guides whoever He

wills. There can be no guide for the one whom Allāh sends astray. (24) Or the person who, with his face, will try to save himself from a terrible punishment on the Day of Judgment? It will be said to the oppressors, "Taste what you earned!" (25) Those before them falsified, so the punishment afflicted them from whence they did not perceive. (26) Allāh made them taste humiliation in this worldly life, while the punishment of the Hereafter is worse. If only they knew! (27) Verily, We have coined every type of similitude for people in this Qur'ān so that they may take heed. (28) It is an Arabic Qur'ān without any crookedness, so that they fear. (29) Allāh coins the similitude of a man who is owned by several masters who keep disputing over him; and another man who is owned entirely by one person. Can the two be equal? All praise be to Allāh, but most of them do not know. (30) Indeed, you shall certainly pass away, and they shall all pass away as well. (31) Then, on the Judgment day, you will all quarrel in the presence of your Lord.

THERE SHALL BE LIGHT FOR THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ALLĀH HAS OPENED TO ISLĀM, WHILE DESTRUCTION IS THE LOT OF THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ARE HARDENED AGAINST ALLĀH'S REMEMBRANCE

The previous verses discussed the conditions of the believers and the disbelievers in the Hereafter. The verses above now discuss the condition of the hearts of these two groups. Allāh says, *"Or the person whose heart Allāh has opened to Islām, because of which he is upon a light from his Lord?"* The heart of such a person is filled with the light of belief. On the other hand, there are those people who are deprived of this light of belief. Describing them, Allāh says, *"Destruction be for those whose hearts have hardened against Allāh's remembrance* (because they are not accustomed to taking Allāh's name). *These people are in manifest deviation."*

The above verse therefore makes a distinction between the two groups of people, making it clear that those whose hearts are filled with the light of belief cannot be compared to those whose hearts are hardened. Allāh mentions in Surah An'ām, *"Whoever Allāh wishes to guide, He expands his bosom for Islām. Whoever He desires to send astray, He narrows and constricts his bosom as if he is ascending in the sky with great difficulty. Thus Allāh afflicts with His punishment those who do not believe."* [*Surah 6, verse 125*]

TWO SIGNS OF AN EXPANDED HEART

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the above verse and then said, *"When celestial light (nūr) enters the heart, the heart expands."* The Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم enquired, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, is there a sign by which one may recognise this?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Yes, the sign is that a person becomes detached from the 'Home of Deceit' (the world), turns towards the 'Home of Eternity' (Hereafter) and prepares for death in advance." [*"Mishkāt" p. 446*]

Allāh says in the above verse, *"Destruction be for those whose hearts have hardened against Allāh's remembrance. These people are in manifest deviation."* Such people are not affected by Allāh's remembrance, and their hearts do not soften by it. A person whose heart has not opened towards Islām will find it difficult to

engage in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*. The remembrance *(Dhikr)* of Allāh is indeed a great boon, which is only appreciated by Allāh's chosen servants. Such people taste the sweetness of remembrance *(Dhikr)*, which becomes their diet.

THE VIRTUE AND IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBRANCE OF ALLĀH *(DHIKR)*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that one must not engage in much talk, unless the talk is Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*. This is so because excessive talking hardens the heart, and the hard-hearted person is the most distant from Allāh. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Busr رضى الله عنه narrates that a person once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "The injunctions of Islām are many. It is difficult for me to act upon every single one of them. Show me something that I may remain steadfast upon." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Your tongue should remain wet with Allāh's remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*." [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Busr رضى الله عنه reports that a villager once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who the best person was. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that the best person is the one whose life is long and whose deeds are good. The person then inquired about the best deed. The reply was, "That you leave this world while you tongue is moist with Allāh's remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* ." [*Ibid*]

THE INTERPRETATION OF "A BOOK WITH SUBJECT MATTER OF SIMILAR IMPORT, WHICH IS OFT-REPEATED"

Allāh proceeds to extol the virtues of the Qur'ān. Allāh says, *"Allāh has revealed the most superb articulation: a Book with subject matter of similar import, which is oft-repeated."* The Arabic word "mutashābihan" (translated above as *"with subject matter of similar import")* means that all verses of the Qur'ān are equal in eloquence, each a miraculous masterpiece. Another meaning of this word is that the verses are all inter-related, each one having a bearing on the other, and confirming the veracity of the other. Every part of the Qur'ān invites people to oneness of Allāh, establishes Risālah (*prophethood*) and confirms the advent of Judgment and the Hereafter.

The word "mathāni" (translated above as *"oft-repeated")* means that advice and good counsel is repeated often in the Qur'ān. Another meaning of the word is that the verses of the Qur'ān are often recited by people without them growing bored. Each time they recite a verse, a new meaning opens up to them.

THE QUALITIES OF THOSE WHO ENGAGE IN REMEMBRANCE *(DHIKR)* (THE DHĀKIRĪN)

Allāh describes one of the fundamental qualities of people who recite Qur'ān. He says, "The bodies of those who fear their Lord shiver with it (with the Qur'ān)..." The effect of this is that *"their hearts and bodies soften to Allāh's remembrance."* The above are the two exclusive attributes of people who fear Allāh.

Allāh says in Surah Anfāl, *"The believers are those whose hearts tremble when Allāh is mentioned, whose faith (Belief) increases when His verses are recited to them and they trust only in their Lord."* [*Surah 6, verse* 3]

Allāh says further, *"This is Allāh's guidance with which He guides whoever He wills. There can be no guide for the one whom Allāh sends astray. Or the person who, with his face, will try to save himself from a terrible punishment on the Judgment day (Can such a person be compared to one who will enter Heaven)?"* This verse means that people destined for Hell will first feel the heat of Hell on their faces. They will entertain the hope that the punishment will be confined to this, without the fire touching the rest of their bodies. However, they will be unable to escape entry into Hell, when their entire bodies will be scorched.

Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"Those who shall be resurrected on their faces will certainly be in the worst of predicaments and most deviated from the path." The fact that they will be dragged on their faces into Hell is a terrible punishment on its own. Allāh then speaks about the announcement to be made to these people. Allāh says, 'it will be said to the oppressors," Taste what you earned!*

Allāh then makes it clear that the disbelievers should not think that the warnings sounded to them are idle threats. There were those in the past who suffered the consequences of their deeds. Allāh says, *"Those before them falsified, so the punishment afflicted them from whence they did not perceive. Allāh made them taste humiliation in this worldly life, while the punishment of the Hereafter is worse. If only they knew!"*

Allāh then describes the attributes of the Qur'ān. Allāh says, *"Verily, We have coined every type of similitude for people in this Qur'ān so that they may take heed."* Allāh then adds, "It is an Arabic Qur'ān ....." It was thus easy for the Qur'ān to be understood by the Arabs who were the first addressees of the Qur'ān. They were also in a position to understand the eloquence and rhetoric of the Qur'ān.

The third attribute of the Qur'ān mentioned in the verse is that it is *"without any crookedness"* i.e. there are no flaws or iniquities in the text of the Qur'ān, neither can any of these be found in the meanings of the verses. Allāh concludes the verse by saying that the Qur'ān was revealed *"so that they fear"* i.e. it was revealed so that people may refrain from falsifying the truth and fear that they will be taken to task for their evil deeds.

THE SIMILITUDE OF THE POLYTHEISTS AND THE MUWAHHID (*MONOTHEISTS*)

Allāh cites the similitude of a Polytheist and a Muwahhid (person who believes in oneness of Allāh). Allāh says, *"Allāh coins the similitude of a man* (a slave) *who is owned by several masters who keep disputing over him..."* Each master is fighting with the other for complete ownership of the slave so that the slave can do his work exclusively. Caught up in this struggle, the slave is also left bewildered, and has to suffer the ill tempers of each upset master.

The other slave is a *"man who is owned entirely by one person."* This slave enjoys peace of mind because he owes loyalty to only one master. Allāh asks,

"Can the two be equal?" Judging the state of mind of each slave, the fact becomes evident that they cannot be the same.

Similar is the example of a polytheist and a Muwahhid (*monotheist*). The Muwahhid (*monotheist*) worships one Allāh only, and begs all his needs from Allāh only. On the other hand, the Polytheists have several gods. They have to worship one, bow to another, prostrate to a third, etc. The difference between the Polytheist and the Muwahhid (*monotheist*) is extremely vast, and the two cannot be reconciled.

"All praise be to Allāh (Who has revealed a guidance, and exposed the fallacy of polytheism), *but most of them do not know."* Most people fail to make a distinction between right and wrong.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *'indeed, you shall certainly pass away, and they shall all pass away as well."* In this verse, Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that those who oppose him in this world shall soon pass into the Hereafter, where they will suffer the terrible consequences of their evil deeds.

The Tafsīr "Jalālain" states that the polytheists of Makkah eagerly awaited the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, saying that they would then be free of him. Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that polytheists will also taste death. They can rest assured only if they are certain of escaping death. However, this is impossible. Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"If you pass away, will they live forever?"* [Surah 21, verse 34]

QUARRELS ON JUDGMENT DAY

"Then, on Judgment day, you will all quarrel in the presence of your Lord." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه mentioned, "We used to recite this verse for a long time, but never understood how we would come to a dispute when our Kitāb (*Book*) is one, our Qibla is one, our Harām is one, and our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is one. Then, when we began to wage war against each other, we realised that the verse was revealed with reference to us." [*"Durrul Manthūr", from the "Mustadrak of Hākim"*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه said, "When we (Muslims) faced each other in combat during the battle of Siffīn, we realised that this verse referred to us." [*"Durrul Manthūr"*]

Although Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه interpreted the verse as a reference to them, the general purport of the words would refer to all disputes and quarrels that would be raised before Allāh on Judgment day.

Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the first disputants to bring their case before Allāh on Judgment day will be two neighbours. The one whose right was denied, shall claim the right before Allāh. [*"Mishkāt" p. 425*]

On Judgment day, subjects will claim their rights from their rulers, the oppressed shall lay charges against their oppressors, creditors will claim their

money from their debtors, and people will lay charges of backbiting and slander against others. The details of this are extensive. In short, if every person wishes to avoid being a defendant on the Day of Judgment then no person should ever misappropriate the right of another in this life.

PART TWENTY-FOUR

۞ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن كَذَبَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وَكَذَّبَ بِٱلصِّدْقِ إِذْ جَآءَهُۥٓ ۚ أَلَيْسَ فِى
جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَٱلَّذِى جَآءَ بِٱلصِّدْقِ وَصَدَّقَ بِهِۦٓ ۙ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ لَهُم مَّا يَشَآءُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾
لِيُكَفِّرَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَسْوَأَ ٱلَّذِى عَمِلُوا۟ وَيَجْزِيَهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ ٱلَّذِى كَانُوا۟
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(32) Who can be more unjust than he who lies about Allāh, and falsifies the truth when it comes to him? Is there no abode for the disbelievers in Hell? (33) The one who brings the truth and confirms it, these are the people who are abstinent. (34) They shall have whatever they desire with their Lord. This is the reward of those who do good. (35) So that Allāh may excuse them for their evil doings and grant them the best of rewards for the good deeds they carried out.

THERE IS NONE AS UNJUST AS A LIAR

While the previous verses discussed the believers, Muwahhiddwīn (*monotheists*), as well as the disbelievers and polytheists, the above verses discuss the ultimate end of each group. Allāh states, *"Who can be more unjust than he who lies about Allāh..."* Some of the lies that the polytheists spoke about Allāh was that Allāh had taken a partner and that he had children. Another lie spoken by the polytheists was that whenever they were stopped from any evil, they said that Allāh had commanded them to do it. Allāh quotes them in Surah A'rāf as saying, *"We found our forefathers doing this, and Allāh has commanded us to do this."* Such people are described as the most unjust people, whose punishment will also be among the worst.

Another evil of such a person is that he *'falsifies the truth* (the Qur'ān) *when it comes to him?"* Allāh asks, *"Is there no abode for the disbelievers in Hell?"* This verse makes it clear that such people are doomed to Hell.

Allāh then describes the believers. He says, *"The one who brings the truth and confirms it, these are the people who are abstinent."* This verse refers to the Prophets عليهم السلام, and all those who perpetuated their responsibility after them. Allāh says that these people are those who abstain from vices like disbelief, polytheism

and all other sins. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه has mentioned that *"the truth"* refers to the Kalimah, *"Lā Ilāha Illallāh"*, and *"The one who brings the truth"* refers to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Talking about the towards for such a person, Allāh says, *"They shall have whatever they desire with their Lord. This is the reward of those who do good."*

"So that Allāh may excuse them for their evil doings and grant them the best of rewards for the good deeds they carried out." This verse means that Allāh has made His promise of rewards apparent to these people in this world so that they excel in good deeds. As a result of this, Allāh will pardon them for whatever evil deeds that may have perpetrated.

أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُۥ ۖ وَيُخَوِّفُونَكَ بِٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦ ۚ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا
لَهُۥ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَمَن يَهْدِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّضِلٍّ ۗ أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِعَزِيزٍ ذِى ٱنتِقَامٍ
﴿٣٧﴾ وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلْ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا
تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِىَ ٱللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كَٰشِفَٰتُ ضُرِّهِۦٓ أَوْ أَرَادَنِى
بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَٰتُ رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ قُلْ حَسْبِىَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ
﴿٣٨﴾ قُلْ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّى عَٰمِلٌ ۖ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾
مَن يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
لِلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ فَمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا ۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ
عَلَيْهِم بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿٤١﴾

(36) Is Allāh not Sufficient for His bondsman? They threaten you with those besides Allāh. There can be no guide for the one whom Allāh sends astray. (37) None can mislead the one whom Allāh guides. Is Allāh not the Mighty, the Most Capable of avenging? (38) Undoubtedly, if you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly reply, "Allāh!" Say, "Tell me about those whom you worship besides Allāh. If Allāh wishes that any harm afflicts me, can they avert the harm? Or if Allāh wishes to shower mercy upon me, are they able to restrain His mercy?" Say, "Allāh suffices for me, and only in Him should those who have trust place their trust." (39) Say, "O my people! Carry out your actions where you are, for I am carrying out mine. Soon you will come to know..." (40) "...to whom a punishment will come which will humiliate him, and on whom an eternal punishment will descend." (41) Without doubt, We have revealed to you a Book with the truth for the people. Whoever is rightly guided, is guided for his benefit, and whoever is misguided, then it is to his own detriment. You have not been sent as a warder over them.

ALLĀH SUFFICES FOR HIS BONDSMEN, AND NONE CAN AVERT ANY DIFFICULTY OR FORTUNE

The polytheists took offence when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم propagated oneness of Allāh to them. One of them said, "You had better desist from speaking ill of our gods, otherwise we shall tell our gods to cause you to lose your senses." It was on this occasion that Allāh revealed the verse: *"Is Allāh not Sufficient for His bondsman..."*

Another narration reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dispatched Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه to demolish the idol Uzza. When he reached the place where Uzza was worshipped, the custodian of the idol said to him, "I am warning you that this idol will make you suffer greatly." Sayyidina Khālid رضى الله عنه did not heed the threat and demolished the idol with an axe. It was on this occasion that Allāh revealed the verse, *"They threaten you with those besides Allāh."* [*"Durrul Manthūr"*]

The polytheists were scared of their idols, and also threatened the believers with these idols. Allāh says, *"Is Allāh not Sufficient for His bondsman?"* meaning that He will protect His bondsmen from any calamities or tragedies. The idols are helpless objects that cannot do any good or evil. In fact, even man and Jinn do not have the power to effect any good or evil without Allāh's will.

"There can be no guide for the one whom Allāh sends astray. None can mislead the one whom Allāh guides. Is Allāh not the Mighty, the Most Capable of avenging?" Since the polytheists do not believe that Allāh is *"the Mighty, the Most Capable of avenging,"* they fear that their idols can harm them. As a result, they remain in fear, and also attempt to instil this fear into others.

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, if you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly reply, 'Allāh!'"* Once they have admitted to this, either by word or by deed, then *"Say, 'Tell me about those whom you worship besides Allāh. If Allāh wishes that any harm afflicts me, can they avert the harm? Or if Allāh wishes to shower mercy upon me, are they able to restrain His mercy?' Say, (Why then should I fear your gods?) Allāh suffices for me, and only in Him should those who have trust place their trust (Therefore, I also place all my trust in Him Alone).'"*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is then commanded to make the following announcement: *"Say, 'O my people! (Since you are not prepared to forsake your creed, and I am never going to abandon Islām) Carry out your actions where you are, for I am carrying out mine. Soon you will come to know to whom a punishment will come which will humiliate him, and on whom an eternal punishment will descend."*

Commentators have mentioned that the humiliating punishment refers to the Battle of Badr when many of the polytheists were killed. These Polytheists were punished in this world, and will certainly suffer the everlasting punishment of the Hereafter.

Allāh concludes this set of verses by saying, *"Without doubt, We have revealed to you a Book with the truth for the people. Whoever is rightly guided, is guided for his benefit, and whoever is misguided, then it is to his own detriment. You have not been sent as a warder over them."* This verse reassures the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that his task was merely to convey the message of Islām to the people,

and that he was not charged to compel them to believe. The ultimate decision to believe and to practise was left to them.

ٱللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَٱلَّتِى لَمْ تَمُتْ فِى مَنَامِهَا ۖ فَيُمْسِكُ ٱلَّتِى
قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ ٱلْأُخْرَىٰٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ شُفَعَآءَ ۚ قُلْ أَوَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ لَا
يَمْلِكُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ قُل لِّلَّهِ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةُ جَمِيعًا ۖ لَّهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ ٱشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوبُ ٱلَّذِينَ
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

(42) Allāh claims souls at the time of their death, as well as those that do not die during their sleep. Allāh then seizes the soul upon which death has been decreed, and releases others until their appointed term. There are certainly signs in this for people who think. (43) Or do they take intercessors besides Allāh? Say, "Even though they do not have control over anything, and have no understanding?" (44) Say, "All intercession is subject to Allāh's will. To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. Eventually, you will all be returned to Him." (45) When Allāh the One is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter contract. However, when the other gods besides Allāh are mentioned, they suddenly rejoice.

ALLĀH CLAIMS SOULS AND INTERCESSION IS ONLY BY HIS LEAVE

Allāh begins by mentioning His supreme control and mastery over the souls of people. Allāh says, *"Allāh claims souls at the time of their death, as well as those that do not die during their sleep."* When the life of a person has ended, Allāh seizes his soul completely, after which his body is left lifeless and motionless. When people fall asleep, their souls are partially seized, because of which they have no apparent control over their movements.

"Allāh then seizes the soul upon which death has been decreed, and releases others until their appointed term." Allāh releases those sleeping souls from His grasp if their lives are not yet over. None besides Allāh has any authority or say in this matter, which is a daily occurrence that happens before every person.

"There are certainly signs in this for people who think." During every waking moment a person should ponder about this phenomenon. He will then realise that he is so helpless that he does not even have any control over his sleeping and awakening. Keeping this in mind, he will perceive that He is the slave of The Being Who created him.

Thereafter, Allāh highlights the foolishness of the polytheists who have

ascribed partners to Allāh. Allāh says, *"Or do they take intercessors besides Allāh?"* These partners are referred to as *"intercessors"* in the verse because the polytheists believed that these partners would intercede on their behalf before Allāh. Allāh says further, *"Say,* '(Do you take them as intercessors) *Even though they do not have control over anything, and have no understanding?"'* Allāh impresses upon the minds of the polytheists that their idols were nothing more than stones which have no powers, nor do they have any knowledge about anything. They do not even know the meaning of intercession, on whose behalf they should intercede, or before whom they should intercede. How can they ever be expected to intercede?

"Say, 'All intercession is subject to Allāh's will." Allāh shall permit intercession only for those whom He pleases, and on whose behalf He pleases. Not even chosen bondsmen like the Prophets عليهم السلام and angels shall be allowed to intercede on behalf of the disbelievers and Polytheists. It is therefore absurd for any disbeliever or polytheist to expect that s/he will ever be pardoned by the so-called "intercession" of their gods.

This answers the question of some polytheists who asked: *"Since the angels and Prophet* عليه السلام *are chosen servants of Allāh who will be permitted to intercede on Judgment day, why can we not expect their intercession on our behalf when we have taken them as gods?"* The foregoing discussion makes it clear that although these honourable personalities will be allowed to intercede, they will not be allowed to intercede on behalf of those whom Allāh will not forgive, viz, the disbelievers and the polytheists.

Intercession will be permitted only for those whom Allāh allows. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Who is there to intercede before Him without His permission?"* [*Surah 2, verse 255*]

A verse of Surah TāHā! reads, *"On that day intercession will benefit only those whom Rahmān (the Beneficent) permits and whose speech He is pleased with."* [*Surah 20, verse 109*]

Referring to the intercession of the angels, Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"only the one with whom He is pleased will be able to intercede."* [*Surah 21, verse 28*]

"To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. Eventually, you will all be returned to Him." This verse emphasises the fact that everything lies in Allāh's control. He has perfect supremacy of every matter in this universe, as well as in the Hereafter.

Allāh then mentions the intense devotion that the polytheists had towards their idols, and their fervent dislike for Islām. Allāh says, *"When Allāh the One is mentioned* (i.e. when *'Lā Ilā ha Illallāh'* is mentioned), *the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter contract."* They are extremely annoyed that the names of their idols are not taken with the name of Allāh. On the other hand, *"when the other gods besides Allāh are mentioned, they suddenly rejoice."*

Similar is the condition of those perpetrators of Bid'ah (*Innovations*) and polytheism who pose as Muslims. They always take offence when they are reminded of Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* or adherence to the Sunnah. However,

they are exuberant when told about following their saints, about the miracles of their saints, and about the fabricated stories about their saints. They can spend entire nights listening to these things, and are able to become ecstatic when hearing the sound of harmoniums and drums. As the night ends with the Fajr Adhān, they then head straight to their beds instead of the Masjid.

قُلِ ٱللَّهُمَّ فَاطِرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ عَٰلِمَ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ أَنتَ تَحْكُمُ بَيْنَ عِبَادِكَ فِي مَا كَانُواْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿46﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُۥ مَعَهُۥ لَٱفْتَدَوْاْ بِهِۦ مِن سُوٓءِ ٱلْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ وَبَدَا لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُواْ يَحْتَسِبُونَ ﴿47﴾ وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا كَسَبُواْ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿48﴾ فَإِذَا مَسَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ضُرٌّ دَعَانَا ثُمَّ إِذَا خَوَّلْنَٰهُ نِعْمَةً مِّنَّا قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أُوتِيتُهُۥ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ ۚ بَلْ هِيَ فِتْنَةٌ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿49﴾ قَدْ قَالَهَا ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُواْ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿50﴾ فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا كَسَبُواْ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ سَيُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا كَسَبُواْ وَمَا هُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿51﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأَيَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿52﴾

(46) Say, "O Āllāh! Creator of the heavens and the earth! Knower of the unseen and the seen! You shall pass judgement on Resurrection day between Your bondsmen concerning the matters in which they differed." (47) If the oppressors owned whatever is on earth and the like thereof in addition, they would certainly want to offer it as ransom to escape the evil of the punishment on Judgment day. Such things will become apparent to them from Allāh, which they never fathomed. (48) The evil of what they earned will become apparent to them, and they will be enveloped by what they used to mock. (49) When any adversity afflicts man, he supplicates to Us. Thereafter, when We confer a bounty upon him, he says, "I have been granted this because of (my) resourcefulness." Rather, it is a test, but most of them do not know. (50)Those before them said the same words, but the things that they earned did not profit them. (51) So (the repercussions of) the evil deeds they earned caught up with them. Soon (the repercussions of) the evil deeds that the oppressive ones among these people earn shall catch up with them as well. Then they will have no escape. (52) Do they not know that Allāh increases sustenance for whoever he pleases, and straitens as well? There are certainly signs in this for a believing nation.

A SPECIAL SUPPLICATION TAUGHT TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم, AND THE INSOLENCE OF MAN

In the first of the above verses, Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make the following Supplication: *"O Allāh! Creator of the heavens and the earth! Knower of the unseen and the seen! You shall pass judgement on the Day of Resurrection between Your bondsmen concerning the matters in which they differed."*

This supplication was taught to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a consolation for the grief he suffered on account of the insolent behaviour of the people towards him, and the hardships they caused him. Through the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Ummah has also been able to learn the same supplication, which they should recite when suffering difficulties from the masses.

Allāh is perfectly Aware of everything that is seen by people, as well as whatever is hidden from sight. Based on this perfect knowledge, He will swiftly pass judgement against those who denied the truth and who regarded falsehood as being the truth. After this judgement on the Day of Resurrection, Allāh will dispatch them to Hell. On the other hand, Allāh will issue the decree that the believers should be admitted into Heaven.

Allāh continues, *"If the oppressors owned whatever is on earth and the like thereof in addition, they would certainly want to offer it as ransom to escape the evil of the punishment on the Day of Judgment."* However, they will have nothing with them to offer on the Day of Judgment. Even if they did, it would never be accepted from them. Allāh says in Surah Baqara, *"Fear the day when one soul will not avail another in the least, no intercession will be accepted, no ransom will taken, and they will not be helped."* [*Surah 2, verse 48*]

The disbelievers refused to believe in the coming of Judgment day, and did not even believe in a fraction of the punishment that lie in store for them in Hell. Therefore, when they are flung into Hell, they will be encountered with punishment that they would never have imagined. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"Such things will become apparent to them from Allāh, which they never fathomed."* It will be then that they will be prepared to ransom their souls from the punishment.

Allāh says further, *"The evil of what they earned will become apparent to them, and they will be enveloped by (the punishment due for) what they used to mock."*

Thereafter, Allāh makes mention of man's psychology. Allāh says, *"When any adversity afflicts man, he supplicates to Us. Thereafter, when We confer a bounty upon him, he says, I have been granted this because of (my) resourcefulness."'* Instead of saying that Allāh conferred the bounty on him, the person attributes it to his own resourcefulness and intelligence. He gloats about his inventiveness and skill in generating money, instead of admitting that Allāh granted it to him.

Allāh declares, *"Rather, it* (the bounty) *is a test, but most of them do not know."* Allāh confers wealth to a person as a test to see whether he will be grateful or not. Man, who says that he earned everything because of his expertise, should

ask himself: "My resourcefulness was with me at the time that I had no money, just as it is with me now that I have money. Why did my resourcefulness and intelligence not help me then?" In this way, he will come to realise that wealth is certainly a blessing from Allāh, which is not dependent on his intelligence. When people fail to express their gratitude to Allāh for His bounties, they have failed the *"test"* of Allāh's bounties.

"Those before them said the same words (that they acquired bounties by virtue of their own intelligence), *but the things that they earned did not profit them."* Their wealth and property could not save them from Allāh's punishment in this world. In the same way, they will be useless in the Hereafter as well.

"So (the repercussions [punishment] of) the evil deeds they earned caught up with them. Soon (the repercussions of) the evil deeds that the oppressive ones among these (present-day) people earn shall catch up with them as well." Consequently, seventy prominent polytheists were killed during the Battle of Badr, while seventy other polytheists were taken captive. The rest had to return to Makkah, disgraced and crestfallen. *"Then they will have no escape."* No person can ever escape Allāh's punishment when it comes to him.

"Do they not know that Allāh increases sustenance for whoever he pleases, and straitens as well?" Sustenance does not depend on the intelligence or resourcefulness of any person. Allāh provides for the educated as well as for the illiterate. It often happens that an intelligent and educated person is penniless, while an ignorant person becomes an affluent entrepreneur. Based on His perfect wisdom, Allāh grants whatever He wills to whoever He wills. *"There are certainly signs in this for a believing nation."*

۞ قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا۟ مِن رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ
ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ (53) وَأَنِيبُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا۟ لَهُۥ مِن
قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ (54) وَٱتَّبِعُوٓا۟ أَحْسَنَ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم
مِّن رَّبِّكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ بَغْتَةً وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ (55)
أَن تَقُولَ نَفْسٌ يَٰحَسْرَتَىٰ عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَّطتُ فِى جَنۢبِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِن كُنتُ لَمِنَ ٱلسَّٰخِرِينَ
(56) أَوْ تَقُولَ لَوْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هَدَىٰنِى لَكُنتُ مِنَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ (57) أَوْ تَقُولَ حِينَ
تَرَى ٱلْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِى كَرَّةً فَأَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ (58) بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَآءَتْكَ
ءَايَٰتِى فَكَذَّبْتَ بِهَا وَٱسْتَكْبَرْتَ وَكُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ (59) وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ تَرَى
ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وُجُوهُهُم مُّسْوَدَّةٌ ۚ أَلَيْسَ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ
(60) وَيُنَجِّى ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ بِمَفَازَتِهِمْ لَا يَمَسُّهُمُ ٱلسُّوٓءُ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

(53) Say, "O My bondsmen who have transgressed their souls! Never lose hope of Allāh's mercy. Verily, Allāh forgives all sins. Undoubtedly, He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful." (54) Turn to your Lord and surrender to Him before punishment afflicts you, after which you will not be assisted. (55) Follow the best injunctions, which your Lord has revealed to you before punishment suddenly afflicts you without you realising it. (56) (Do all this to avoid the situation where) a soul says, "Woe betide me for the neglect I showed with regard to Allāh! In fact, I was from among those who mocked!" (57) Or (that a soul says), "If only Allāh had guided me, I would have certainly been from among the abstinent." (58) Or that a soul says when seeing the punishment, "If only I had a chance (to return to the world), I would certainly be from among those who do good." (59) Indeed, My verses came to you, but you falsified them, you were arrogant and from among the disbelievers. (60) On the Day of Judgment, you will see that the faces of those who lied about Allāh will be dark. Is there not an abode in Hell for the arrogant? (61) Allāh will rescue those with Piety by virtue of their success. No evil will touch them, neither shall they grieve. (62) Allāh is the Creator of everything, and He is the Administrator of all things. (63) The keys of the heavens and the earth belong to him. Those who disbelieve in Allāh 's verses (and signs) are the real losers.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF ALLĀH'S ALL-ENCOMPASSING MERCY, THE COMMAND TO TURN TO ALLĀH, AND THE MISERABLE PLIGHT OF THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE

Allāh is the Wise, All Hearing, All Seeing, All Knowing, Omnipotent, and the Most Forgiving. Allāh declares His all-encompassing forgiveness when He instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to, *"Say, 'O My bondsmen who have transgressed their souls! Never lose hope of Allāh's mercy. Verily, Allāh forgives all sins. Undoubtedly, He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.*

Allāh will forgive the greatest sinner if he sincerely repents to Him. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه has mentioned that no verse of the Qur'ān exceeds the above verse in expressing the vast nature of Allāh's mercy [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]. However, the condition for a disbeliever or a polytheist to be forgiven is that they accept Islām. They will not be forgiven if they remain as disbelievers and polytheists.

Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Verily Allāh does not forgive that polytheism be committed, but may forgive all sins besides this for whom He wills."* [*Surah 4, verse 48*]

A verse of Surah Āl Imrān reads, *"Verily those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, the earth full of gold shall never be accepted from any of them if they ever wish to offer it as ransom. Theirs shall be a painful punishment and they shall have no helpers."* [*Surah 3, verse 91*]

Allāh's doors of forgiveness are wide open for the disbelievers and

polytheists on condition that they accept Islām and repent sincerely. Bukhari (*v.2 p.7 10*) reports that there were many polytheists who perpetrated vices like murder and adultery. They approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the desire to accept Islām, but asked whether the major sins they committed could be revoked. It was then that Allāh revealed the following two verses:

"Those who do not call to another deity with Allāh, who only kill a soul forbidden by Allāh with a warrant, and who do not fornicate." [*Surah Furqān (25), verse 68*]

"Say, 'O My bondsmen who have transgressed their souls! Never lose hope of Allāh's mercy." [*Surah Zumar (39), verse 53*]

When a person accepts Islām and repents for his disbelief and polytheism, all his previous sins are forgiven, except the rights he owes to others. Similarly, a Muslim who may have committed an abundance of sins will be forgiven if he repents sincerely, except for the fights he owes to others. Compensating people for the rights owed to them is an integral part of Taubah (*repentance*).

Sayyidah Asmā bint Yazīd رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"Say, 'O My bondsmen who have transgressed their souls! Never lose hope of Allāh's mercy. Verily, Allāh forgives all sins.'"* Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added, "And Allāh does not mind." This means that Allāh does not mind forgiving the worst sinners for the worst sins. When a person repents sincerely to Allāh, there is nothing to prevent the repentance from being accepted.

It is best for a Muslim to constantly make Taubah (*repentance*). Even if he happens to perpetrate sins thereafter, he should repeat the Taubah (*repentance*) each time. Millions of sins cannot even come near to exhausting Allāh mercy. Allāh says in Surah Yusuf, *"do not become despondent of Allāh 's mercy. Indeed only the disbelieving nation grows despondent of Allāh's mercy."* [*Surah 12, verse 87*]

In a discussion with the angels, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said to them, *"Only the deviant are despondent of Allāh's mercy."* [*Surah Hijr (15), verse 56*]

While minor sins may be forgiven by carrying out good deeds, major sins require Taubah (*repentance*) to guarantee that they are forgiven. If a person passes away with belief before making Taubah (*repentance*), his sins will be forgiven, but there is no guarantee that the forgiveness will be without punishment. Although Allāh can pardon a person without him making Taubah (*repentance*), but the risk of being punished in this event is very high. It is therefore best to make Taubah (*repentance*) and not run the risk of suffering punishment.

Taubah (*repentance*) should be made constantly, and a person must never lose hope that Allāh will certainly forgive him. It is the hallmark of a loyal servant that he becomes convinced of Allāh's forgiveness after hearing Allāh's promises. However, he should also abstain from sins and always endeavour to perform good deeds.

None has been given greater glad tidings of forgiveness than the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In the opening verses of Surah Fatah, Allāh declares that all the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم past, present, and future errors are forgiven.

Despite this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to exert himself so greatly in worship that his feet used to swell. When asked the reason for this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Should I then not be a grateful slave?" [Bukhari p. 152] This means that the exertion in worship is a token of gratitude for the favour of forgiveness.

It is common knowledge that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave many Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم the good news that they were assured entry into Heaven. Among these were the famous Ashara Mubashara (*The ten most pious Companions who were given glad tiding to enter paradise before their deaths*). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also conveyed the following message of Allāh to those Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم who participated in the Battle of Badr: "Do as you please, because I have already forgiven you all."

Although these and many other Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم were assured entry into Heaven, they never understood it to mean that they were free to commit sins and discard their obligations. In fact, they always refrained from sin and laboured hard to carry out good deeds. They used to be even extremely wary of committing any sins that seemed most insignificant.

Allāh declares in Surah TāHā, *Verily I am the Most Forgiving towards the one who repents, believes, does good deeds and is thereafter rightly guided."* This verse tells us that Allāh will forgive those who make Taubah (*repentance*), who have belief and who perform good deeds.

The above discussion has been written so that no person commits sins freely after hearing about Allāh's all encompassing mercy. It has also been written so that no person delays his Taubah (*repentance*), because numerous authentic Ahadīth state that many believers will also be sent to Hell to purify them of their sins. They will then be admitted into Heaven because of the intercession of the Prophets عليهم السلام, the angels, other believers, and (of course) Allāh's sheer mercy. [*"Mishkāt" p. 490/1*]

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"Turn to your Lord and surrender to Him before punishment afflicts you, after which you will not be assisted."* Once Allāh's punishment arrives, nothing can save a person. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has stated that the Arabic word 'in ī bu' (translated above as *"turn to "*) is derived from the root word 'inābah'. He points out that although the words 'inābah' and 'Taubah' have a similar meaning, there is a delicate difference. 'Taubah' takes place when a person turns to Allāh in repentance because he fears Allāh's punishment. On the other hand, 'inābah' will take place when a person turns in repentance to Allāh because he is ashamed of himself for sinning despite Allāh's tremendous favours on him.

Explaining the meaning of surrendering to Allāh, he says that it refers to devoting oneself to Allāh's obedience with complete sincerity.

"Follow the best injunctions, which your Lord has revealed to you before punishment suddenly afflicts you without you realising it." This verse refers to following the injunctions propounded in the Qur'ān. The following are some interpretations of the Arabic word "ahsan" (translated above as "the best"):

🕮 The word means "the good injunctions" (i.e. without

translating in the superlative form).

- It refers to those deeds that are relatively arduous in comparison to the concessions that the Shari'ah has granted. These deeds (azā'im) carry a greater reward than the concessions do.
- It refers to that act of worship, which holds the most reward compared to other acts of worship in the same category.
- It means that laws which have not been abrogated should be carried out instead of laws that have been abrogated.
- Sayyidina Atā رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that the three verses, beginning from *"Say, 'O My bondsmen who have transgressed their souls..."* until.... *before punishment suddenly afflicts you without you realising it"* were revealed in Madinah, with reference to Sayyidina Wahshi bin Harb رضى الله عنه. (He was the person who, as a disbeliever, martyred the uncle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه during the Battle of Uhud).

The foregoing verses convey the message that a person should never lose hope of being forgiven, even though he may have committed the worst of sins. He should constantly obey Allāh's commands and abstain from all sins, fearing that Allāh's punishment may overtake him. The reason for all of this is to avoid the situation on the Day of Judgment when a soul should lament saying, *"Woe betide me for the neglect I showed with regard to Allāh! In fact, (in addition to being disobedient to Allāh) I was (also) from among those who mocked (the believers)!"*

Adherence to the Shari'ah is also necessary so that no soul says on the Day of Judgment, *"If only Allāh had guided me, I would have certainly been from among the abstinent."* They will not be able to say this because Allāh had sent the Prophets عليهم السلام, as well as His divine scriptures. The message of Islām was made clear, as were the punishments for disbelief and sin.

Leading a righteous life in this world will save a person from the punishment of the Hereafter, seeing which souls will cry out, *"If only I had a chance (to return to the world), I would certainly be from among those who do good."*

Allāh says in another verse, *"If they were to be sent back (to the world), they would return to what they had been prohibited from and they truly are liars."* When they had already wasted one life, and will be faced by the same trials of wealth, etc, how can they be expected to change themselves?

Allāh will tell them, *"Indeed, My verses came to you, but you falsified them, you were arrogant and from among the disbelievers."*

Allāh then describes the scene of the Day of Judgment, saying, *"On the Day of Judgment, you will see that the faces of those who lied about Allāh will be dark."* These will be the people who ascribed partners to Allāh, and attributed such things to Him of which He is free. Despite the fact that the truth came to them, these

people behaved arrogantly and refused to accept. They were rather more concerned about what their mentors and associates would say. Allāh says about them, *"Is there not an abode in Hell for the arrogant?"* Hell shall certainly be their eternal abode.

On the other hand, *"Allāh will rescue those with Piety (those who did good actions, shunned sin, disbelief and polytheism) by virtue of their success. No evil (punishment) will touch them, neither shall they grieve."*

Allāh then describes His greatness when He says, *"Allāh is the Creator of everything, and He is the Administrator of all things. The keys of the heavens and the earth belong to him. Those who disbelieve in Allāh 's verses (and signs) are the real losers."*

قُلْ أَفَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ تَأْمُرُوٓنِّىٓ أَعْبُدُ أَيُّهَا ٱلْجَـٰهِلُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَلَقَدْ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَـٰسِرِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ بَلِ ٱللَّهَ فَٱعْبُدْ وَكُن مِّنَ ٱلشَّـٰكِرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

(64) Say, "O ignorant ones! Do you command me to worship others besides Allāh?" (65) Indeed We have sent revelation to you and to those (The Prophets عليهم السلام) before you stating, "If you perpetrate polytheism, your deeds will certainly be wasted, and you will definitely become of the losers. (66) "Rather worship Allāh and be among the grateful ones."

TELL THE IGNORANT ONES THAT YOU CANNOT WORSHIP ANYONE BESIDES ALLĀH

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the polytheists told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to worship their gods, after which they would also worship Allāh. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verses, stating, *"Say, 'O ignorant ones! Do you command me to worship others besides Allāh?"'*

Allāh says further, *'Indeed We have sent revelation to you and to those* (the Prophets عليهم السلام) before you stating, *'If you perpetrate polytheism, your deeds will certainly be wasted (without any reward), and you will definitely become of the losers"* i.e. you will have lost your life in futility, achieving nothing but eternal damnation. The Prophets عليهم السلام were innocent of all sins, and it was impossible for them to perpetrate disbelief and polytheism. However, if one assumes that they could ever perpetrate disbelief and polytheism, even they would be unable to save themselves from Allāh's chastisement. Therefore, how can any other person expect any mercy in this matter. Although the verse is addressed to the Prophets عليهم السلام, it applies specifically to their Ummahs, and warns them against perpetrating these sins.

"Rather worship Allāh and be among the grateful ones." Allāh raised the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in an environment of disbelief and polytheism, but still

safeguarded him from these vices. It is for this blessing that he is commanded to be grateful. Allāh advises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to ignore the temptation of the disbelievers, and to continue to worship only Allāh.

وَمَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ وَٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتُ مَطْوِيَّـٰتٌۢ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ۚ سُبْحَـٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَـٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿67﴾ وَنُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿68﴾ وَأَشْرَقَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَوُضِعَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبُ وَجِا۟ىٓءَ بِٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءِ وَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿69﴾ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿70﴾

(67) They have not revered Allāh as he deserves to be revered, although, on the Day of Judgment, the entire earth will be in His grasp, and the skies will be folded in His right hand. He is Pure and Exalted above all that they ascribe as partners to Him. (68) The trumpet will be blown, and everyone in the heavens and the earth will fall unconscious, except those whom Allāh chooses. Thereafter, it will be blown a second time, when they will all suddenly stand up, watching. (69) The earth will illuminate with the light of her Lord, the records of deeds will be placed, and the Prophets عليهم السلام and witnesses will be brought. Judgement will be passed between them with the truth (justice), and they will not be oppressed. (70) Every soul will be granted full recompense for what it did, and Allāh knows best what deeds people carried out.

"THEY HAVE NOT REVERED ALLĀH AS HE DESERVES TO BE REVERED"

Although Allāh cannot be seen in this world, His attributes and might are clearly manifested in this world. Every thinking person realises that Allāh has created everything. Therefore, He deserves to be worshipped. However, there are those who ascribe partners to Allāh and worship other beings. Not only are they themselves polytheists, but they even attempted to convince the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to commit polytheism. It is these people who *"have not revered Allāh as he deserves to be revered."*

It is extremely foolish not to worship Allāh, when His great powers are displayed to man every day of his life. On the Day of Judgment as well, His tremendous powers will be evident because *"the entire earth will be in His grasp, and the skies will be folded in His right hand."*

Allāh is *"Pure and Exalted above all that they ascribe as partners to Him."* Since a verse of Surah Shura states, *"There is nothing like Him,"* Muslims believe that Allāh is free of a body and limbs. Therefore, if we assume that "His right hand" actually refers to a hand as we have, we will be guilty of comparing Allāh to

ourselves. For this reason, we hold the belief that we do not know exactly what is meant by such a verse (and other such verses), but we believe in it and know that it is the truth from Allāh, according to whatever interpretation He intends.

Whereas certain Scholars have tendered interpretation of such verses, it is best to believe that only Allāh knows the true interpretation. We believe that Allāh is free of a physical body. Whenever any physical limb is attributed to Allāh in the Qur'ān or the Ahadīth, we will say that Allāh best knows the interpretation of these. Such will be our stance whenever we encounter such Qur'ānic verses or Ahadīth. We will apply this in the following hadith as well.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that a Jew once said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! Allāh shall certainly restrain the skies with one finger, the earth with one finger, the mountains with one finger, the trees with one finger, and the rest of creation also with one finger. Thereafter, Allāh will say, 'I am the King.'"* When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم heard this he smiled so widely that his molars shone through. He then recited the verse, *"They have not revered Allāh as he deserves to be revered, whereas, on the Day of Judgment..."* The smile of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was confirmation of what the Jew said. [*Bukhari p. 1102/3*]

THE BLOWING OF THE TRUMPET ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Allāh states, *"The trumpet will be blown, and everyone in the heavens and the earth will fall unconscious, except those whom Allāh chooses. Thereafter, it will be blown a second time, when they will all suddenly stand up, watching."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"With his head bowed, Isrāfīl* عليه السلام *is attentively listening for the command to blow the trumpet."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that the trumpet is shaped like a horn. [*"Mishkāt" p. 482*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Allāh will certainly make Judgment day dawn while two people are still busy opening a fabric (in a transaction). The transaction will not even be concluded and the fabric will not yet be folded when Judgment day shall take place. Judgment day will take place when a person will have milked his camel and not yet had the opportunity to drink the milk. Judgment day will certainly take place when a person will be busy plastering the wall of a pond and will not even have the opportunity to allow his animals to drink from it. Indeed, Judgment day will take place as a person lifts a morsel to his mouth, not allowing him the opportunity to eat it."* [*Bukhari*]

When the trumpet is blown the first time, every living being will drop dead, while the souls of the dead will become unconscious. Thereafter, the trumpet will be blown for a second time and the dead will rise from their graves and proceed to the plain of Reckoning. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the period between the two soundings of the trumpet will be forty. When people asked Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه if he meant forty days, he declared, "I do not know." When they asked whether it was forty months, he said, "I do not know." When they asked whether he meant forty years, he again said, "I do not know." [*"Mishkāt" p. 481*]

THE EXCEPTION OF "THOSE WHOM ALLĀH CHOOSES"

Allāh mentions, *"The trumpet will be blown, and everyone in the heavens and the earth will fall unconscious, except those whom Allāh chooses."* The only authentic hadith that sheds light on the purport of the above exception is one narrated by Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه. He reports that there was once an argument between a Muslim and a Jew. As the quarrel became heated, the Muslim took an oath saying, "I swear by that Being Who gave superiority to Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم over the universe!" In response to this, the Jew blurted, "I swear by the Being Who gave superiority to Mūsa عليه السلام over the universe!"

Upon hearing this, the Muslim slapped the Jew, who promptly reported the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent for the Muslim and asked for his side of the story. After ascertaining the facts, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Do not express my superiority above any Prophet* (in a manner that lowers the rank of the other Prophets), because, on the Day of Judgment, every soul shall fall unconscious. I shall also fall unconscious with them. I will then be the first to regain consciousness. I shall see Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام standing and holding on to Allāh's throne. I cannot say whether he will be among those who regained consciousness before me, or whether he will be among those whom Allāh has excluded (i.e. from among *"those whom Allāh chooses")."*

Another narration quotes the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying, "I do not know whether his unconsciousness at Mount Tūr will be taken into account (in lieu of which he will not fall unconscious on the Day of Judgment), or whether he will among those who will regain consciousness before me." [*Bukhari v.1 p.485, v.2 p.688 v.2 p.965*]

"The earth will illuminate with the light of her Lord..." The earth will light up without the sun or the moon. It will be illuminated solely by the command of Allāh. Thereafter, *"the records of deeds will be placed* (in the hands of every person), *and the Prophets and witnesses will be brought."* The Prophets عليهم السلام will be brought forward to testify against their respective nations (Ummahs). They will also be questioned about the message they were entrusted to convey. Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"We shall definitely question those to whom messengers were sent, and we will surely question the messengers."* [*Surah 7, verse 6*]

Along with the Prophets عليهم السلام, *"witnesses"* will also be brought forward. The implication of this term is extremely vast. It includes the Prophets عليهم السلام, the records of deeds, the recording angels, as well as the limbs and tongue of every person.

"Judgement will be passed between them with the truth (justice), and they will not be oppressed. Every soul will be granted full recompense for what it did, and Allāh knows best what deeds people carried out."According to Allāh's knowledge of every person's deeds, He will either reward or punish them. No person will receive a reward smaller than what he deserves. In fact, the rewards of every person will be multiplied at least ten times.

Allāh says in another verse, *"Whosoever does a good deed will receive tenfold the like thereof Whoever perpetrates a sin will only be punished the like thereof and will not*

be oppressed." Another verse states, *"the retribution for evil will be the like thereof"* i.e. the punishment for a sin will not be increased as is the case for the rewards of good deeds which are multiplied at least ten times.

وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًاۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا فُتِحَتۡ أَبۡوَٰبُهَا وَقَالَ
لَهُمۡ خَزَنَتُهَآ أَلَمۡ يَأۡتِكُمۡ رُسُلٞ مِّنكُمۡ يَتۡلُونَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّكُمۡ وَيُنذِرُونَكُمۡ
لِقَآءَ يَوۡمِكُمۡ هَٰذَاۚ قَالُواْ بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِنۡ حَقَّتۡ كَلِمَةُ ٱلۡعَذَابِ عَلَى ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ (71) قِيلَ
ٱدۡخُلُوٓاْ أَبۡوَٰبَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَاۖ فَبِئۡسَ مَثۡوَى ٱلۡمُتَكَبِّرِينَ (72) وَسِيقَ
ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوۡاْ رَبَّهُمۡ إِلَى ٱلۡجَنَّةِ زُمَرًاۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتۡ أَبۡوَٰبُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمۡ
خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيۡكُمۡ طِبۡتُمۡ فَٱدۡخُلُوهَا خَٰلِدِينَ (73) وَقَالُواْ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ
ٱلَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعۡدَهُۥ وَأَوۡرَثَنَا ٱلۡأَرۡضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ حَيۡثُ نَشَآءُۖ فَنِعۡمَ أَجۡرُ
ٱلۡعَٰمِلِينَ (74) وَتَرَى ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ حَآفِّينَ مِنۡ حَوۡلِ ٱلۡعَرۡشِ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمۡدِ رَبِّهِمۡۖ
وَقُضِيَ بَيۡنَهُم بِٱلۡحَقِّۚ وَقِيلَ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ (75)

(71) The disbelievers will be dragged to Hell in groups. Until, when they arrive there, its gates will be opened and its keepers will say, "Did the messengers from among you not come to you, reciting to you the verses of your Lord, and warning you of this day's meeting?" They will say, "Certainly, However, the decree of punishment has been passed against the disbelievers." (72) It will be said, "Enter the gates of Hell, where you shall abide forever. Evil indeed is the abode of the haughty ones!" (73) Those who feared their Lord will be led to Jannah (Heaven) in groups. Until, when they arrive there and its gates are opened, its keepers will say, "Peace be on you! May you be pleased. Enter Heaven to abide forever." (74) They will say, "All praise be to Allāh, Who has fulfilled His promise to us, made us inheritors of the earth, and we may settle wherever we wish in Jannah (Heaven). Excellent indeed is the reward of those who perform good deeds!" (75) You shall see the angels thronging around the Throne, glorifying Allāh's praises. Then, with justice, judgement will be passed between people, and it will be said, "All praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the universe."

THE DISBELIEVERS AND THE BELIEVERS WILL ENTER THEIR ABODES IN GROUPS

These verses describe the ultimate result of the disbelievers and the believers. Allāh says, *"The disbelievers will be dragged to Hell in groups."* A verse of Surah Tūr states, *"The day when they* (the disbelievers) *will be forcibly shoved into the Fire of Hell."* [*Surah 52, verse* 13]

The disbelievers will be dragged to Hell in many groups because the

categories and levels of disbelief vary. Continuing the discussion on the disbelievers, Allāh says that they will be dragged *"Until, when they arrive there, its gates will be opened..."* Just like the prisons of this world, the gates of Hell remain shut, and are opened only when a new inmate arrives. Addressing the newcomers, the keepers of Hell will ask, *"Did the messengers from among you (with whom you could freely associated) not come to you, reciting to you the verses of your Lord, and warning you of this day's meeting?"*

The people of Hell will reply, *"Certainly* (they recited the verses to us and warned us). *However, the decree of punishment has been passed against the disbelievers." i.e.* Allāh has decreed that all disbelievers will have to enter Hell. As a result of this, we will have to face the punishment, which would have been averted if we had not been disbelievers. Thereafter, *"It will be said, 'Enter the gates of Hell, where you shall abide forever. Evil indeed is the abode of the haughty ones!"* Because they were too proud to accept the truth, they died as disbelievers and will enter Hell which is the abode for proud people. Once they enter Hell, the gates will be shut behind them. *"They shall never be removed from the Fire."*

Allāh then talks about the believers. He says, *"Those who feared their Lord will be led to Heaven in groups."* The primary stage of Piety is to accept Islām and shun disbelief and polytheism. Thereafter, the believers belong to several groups, based upon the amount and quality of good deeds that they perform, as well as their level of abstinence from sin. According to the groups that they belong to, they will be led into Heaven.

"Until, when they arrive there (at Heaven) and its gates are opened, its keepers will say, 'Peace be on you! May you be pleased. Enter therein to abide forever.'" They will find the gates of Heaven already open for them, just as doors are opened beforehand for guests to enter. They shall live in peace and comfort in Heaven, and will' never have to leave. Allāh says in another verse of the Qur'ān, "No difficulty shall afflict them there, neither will they be removed from there." [*Surah Hijr (15), verse 48*]

The people of Heaven will engage in remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* and shall praise Allāh abundantly. Allāh says, *"They will say, 'All praise be to Allāh, Who has fulfilled His promise to us, made us inheritors of the earth, and we may settle wherever we wish in Heaven. Excellent indeed is the reward of those who perform good deeds"*!

As the Surah concludes, Allāh briefly describes a scene on the Day of Judgment. Addressing the reader, Allāh says, *"You shall see the angels thronging around the Throne, glorifying Allāh's praises. Then, with justice, judgement will be passed between people, and it will be said, 'All praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the universe."*

NOTE: Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم never slept until he recited Surah Bani Isrā'īl and Surah Zumar every night. [*Tirmidhi*]

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

سورة المؤمن

Makkan	Surah Al-Mu'min	Verses 85

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) HāMīm. (2) This Book is revealed from Allāh, the Mighty, the All Knowing. (3) The Forgiver of sins, Acceptor of repentance, Severe in punishment, and All Powerful. There is none worthy of worship besides Him, and all shall return to Him.

ALLĀH IS THE FORGIVER OF SINS, THE ACCEPTOR OF REPENTANCE, AND ALSO SEVERE IN PUNISHMENT

Surah Mu'min is also called Surah Ghāfir. It is the first of a series of Surahs that begin with the words HāMīm. The others that follow are Surah HāMīm Sajdah, Surah Shura, Surah Zukhruf, Surah Dukhān, Surah Jāthiya, and Surah Ahqāf. These are referred to as the Seven Hawāmīm.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin 'Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Everything has an essence, and the essence of the Qur'ān is in those Surahs that begin with HāMīm (the Hawāmīm)."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned, "The person who, in the morning, together with Āyatul Kursi, recites from the beginning of Surah Ghāfir until the words "Ilayhil Masīr" (i.e. the first three verses), will be safe (from all calamities and difficulties). Whoever recites these two in the evening, shall remain safe until the following morning."

Allāh commences the Surah with the words, *"HāMīm."* This is from the Hurūfe Muqatta'āt. Only Allāh knows what the meaning of this is. Allāh then continues to say, *"This Book is revealed from Allāh..."* Hereafter, six attributes of Allāh are enumerated. These are **(1) "the Mighty", (2) "the All Knowing", (3) "The Forgiver of sins", (4) "Acceptor of repentance", (5) "Severe in punishment" and (6) "All Powerful".**

After mentioning Allāh's might and knowledge, attention is drawn to the fact that Allāh is also *"the Forgiver of sins and the Acceptor of repentance"*. Therefore, the believer should always turn to Allāh in repentance after committing a sin. If he does not seek Allāh's forgiveness, he should never think that he will be safe in the Hereafter, because Allāh is *"Severe in punishment"* and *"All Powerful."* Allāh is perfectly Capable of taking a person to task for his/her sins, and punishing the sinner in this world as well as in the Hereafter. None is able to avert Allāh's punishment when it comes.

"There is none worthy of worship besides Him, and all shall return to Him." It is compulsory for the disbelievers and the polytheists to repent for their disbelief and polytheism, and to accept the worship of One Allāh only. They should realise that they will not live in this world forever, but will soon have to leave for the Hereafter, where they will face Allāh. Therefore, they should make an effort to leave this world in a condition that their beliefs and deeds are all correct. In this way, they will be saved from eternal damnation in the Hereafter.

مَا يُجَٰدِلُ فِيٓ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ فَلَا يَغۡرُرۡكَ تَقَلُّبُهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡبِلَٰدِ ﴿4﴾ كَذَّبَتۡ قَبۡلَهُمۡ قَوۡمُ نُوحٖ وَٱلۡأَحۡزَابُ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡۖ وَهَمَّتۡ كُلُّ أُمَّةِۭ بِرَسُولِهِمۡ لِيَأۡخُذُوهُۖ وَجَٰدَلُواْ بِٱلۡبَٰطِلِ لِيُدۡحِضُواْ بِهِ ٱلۡحَقَّ فَأَخَذۡتُهُمۡۖ فَكَيۡفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ ﴿5﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ حَقَّتۡ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَنَّهُمۡ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿6﴾

(4) It is only the disbelievers who argue about Allāh's verses, so let not their travelling about through the lands deceive you. (5) Before them, the nation of Nūh falsified, as well as the many groups after them. Every nation resolved to seize their Prophet, and they argued with falsehood in an effort to refute the truth. So I seized them instead. How (severe) was My punishment? (6) Thus, the declaration of your Lord has been passed against the disbelievers, that they shall certainly be from among the inmates of the Fire.

ONLY THE DISBELIEVERS ARGUE ABOUT ALLĀH'S VERSES, AND THEIR TRAVELLING ABOUT SHOULD NOT DECEIVE YOU BECAUSE OTHERS LIKE THEM WERE PUNISHED

Those who refused to believe in the Qur'ān used to argue with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and raise all sorts of ludicrous objections. Their arguments distressed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم greatly because of his deep concern for their salvation. These polytheists were affluent people, who ate the best and freely travelled where they wished because of their excellent means of transport. The possibility therefore existed that the Muslims would think that they, as believers, were poor, whereas the disbelievers, who denied Allāh, were enjoying the comforts and pleasures of this world. To dispel this thought, Allāh revealed the verse: *"let not their travelling about through the lands deceive you."* The pleasure they seem to enjoy is only a fleeting experience, which will soon come to an end. At the end, they will have to suffer the everlasting tortures of Hell.

Allāh then says, *"Before them, the nation of Nūh falsified, as well as the many groups after them. Every nation resolved to seize their Prophet (and assassinate him), and they argued with falsehood in an effort to refute the truth."* As much as they tried to subdue the truth, they could not succeed completely. Eventually, Allāh's punishment destroyed them. Allāh says, *"So I seized them instead. How (swift) was My punishment?"* Allāh's punishment was swift and extremely severe.

These verses console the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because they convey the message that the disbelievers of the previous Ummahs also argued with their Prophets عليهم السلام, just as the polytheists debated with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They were eventually destroyed when Allāh's punishment caught up with them in this world. In addition to this punishment, they will also be subjected to punishment in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"Thus, the declaration of your Lord has been passed against the disbelievers, that they shall certainly be from among the inmates of the Fire."*

ٱلَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ ٱلْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ
لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا فَٱغْفِرْ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟
سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٧﴾ رَبَّنَا وَأَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ٱلَّتِى وَعَدتَّهُمْ وَمَن
صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨﴾
وَقِهِمُ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ۚ وَمَن تَقِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمْتَهُۥ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ
ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

(7) The angels carrying the Throne, as well as those around them, glorify the praises of their Lord, believe in Him, and seek forgiveness for those who believe. (They say), "O our Lord! Your mercy and knowledge encompasses everything. So forgive those who repent and who follow Your path. And save them from the punishment of the Blaze." (8) "O our Lord! Admit them into the gardens of eternity, which You have promised them, as well as the righteous ones from among their fathers, their spouses, and their progeny. Undoubtedly, You are the Mighty, the Wise." (9) "And save them from difficulties. You have certainly showered Your mercy on the one whom You have saved from difficulties on this day. This is indeed the greatest success."

THE ANGELS CARRYING ALLĀH'S THRONE PRAY FOR THE BELIEVERS, AND FOR THE ADMISSION OF THEIR FATHERS, SPOUSES AND PROGENY INTO HEAVEN

Allāh highlights the lofty status of the believers by stating that the angels bearing Allāh's throne, as well as those close to them, all pray for the believers. Together with hymning Allāh's praises, they seek forgiveness on behalf of the believers, saying, *"O our Lord! Your mercy and knowledge encompasses everything. So*

forgive those who repent (from disbelief and polytheism) and who follow Your path. And save them from the punishment of the Blaze."

In addition to this, they also supplicate, *"O our Lord I Admit them into the gardens of eternity, which You have promised them, as well as the righteous ones from among their fathers, their spouses, and their progeny. Undoubtedly, You are the Mighty, the Wise."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" interprets the verse to mean that, together with those who will enter Heaven, Allāh should also enter their forefathers, spouses and progeny along with them.

Although the families of the people of Heaven may not be deserving of the positions they will receive alongside their kin, Allāh will admit them all together so that the joy of the people of Heaven will be completed. In fact, their joy will be amplified greatly when they have their kith and kin with them. The Arabic word "Ābā" (translated above as *'fathers "*) refers to all a person's ascendants in genealogy. *"Spouses"* refers to husbands and wives.

Allāh says in Surah Tūr, *"Those who carry out good deeds and whose progeny follow them in belief We shall join their progeny with them without reducing anything from their deeds."* [*Surah 52, verse 21*]

Describing the people who will follow their forebears to Heaven, Allāh says, *"the righteous ones"* here in Surah Mumin, and a *"progeny (who) follow them in Belief"* in the verse of Surah Tūr. These definitions serve as specific conditions to be fulfilled. Therefore, a person's progeny may be admitted with him into Heaven only if they possess Belief. If they do not have Belief, their mere biological relationship will not be sufficient to take them into Heaven.

The angels pray further, *"And save them (the Believers) from difficulties (Hell). You have certainly showered Your mercy on the one whom You have saved from difficulties on this day (Day of Judgment). This is indeed the greatest success."* Certain commentators have interpreted *"this day"* as this worldly life. In this case, the Arabic word "sayyi'āt" (translated above as "difficulties") will be translated in its original meaning, viz, sins. This means that Allāh will shower His mercy on those whom He has saved from sin in this world.

The fact that the angels make supplication for the believers signifies their nobility and proximity to Allāh. A believer should always make supplication for himself and for others. Even those Compainions رضى الله عنهم whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم signaled out as people destined for Heaven, always engaged in supplication and always carried out good deeds. This is the hallmark of true servitude.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنَادَوْنَ لَمَقْتُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ مِن مَّقْتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ إِذْ
تُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى الْإِيمَانِ فَتَكْفُرُونَ ﴿10﴾ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَمَتَّنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ
فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَىٰ خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ ﴿11﴾ ذَٰلِكُم بِأَنَّهُ إِذَا دُعِيَ اللَّهُ
وَحْدَهُ كَفَرْتُمْ وَإِن يُشْرَكْ بِهِ تُؤْمِنُوا فَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْكَبِيرِ ﴿12﴾

(10) Verily it will be announced to the disbelievers, "Undoubtedly, Allāh's hatred for you is worse than your hatred for yourselves. When you were called towards belief, you disbelieved." (11) They will say, "O our Lord.' You gave us death twice and granted us life twice. We admit our sins, so is there any way to escape?" (12) "This is because you disbelieved each time that Allāh Alone was mentioned. However, you believed whenever partners were ascribed to Him. Judgement shall be for Allāh, the Exalted, the Great.

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL ADMIT THEIR SINS AND ASK FOR A MEANS TO ESCAPE, BUT WILL BE TOLD THAT THEY WILL SUFFER BECAUSE THEY WERE AVERSE TO ONENESS OF ALLAH AND INCLINED TO POLYTHEISM

In this world, the disbelievers hold a high opinion about themselves, thinking that they are superior to the Muslims. However, when they will see themselves in a most pathetic condition on the Day of Judgment, they will hate themselves bitterly. They will then be told, *"Undoubtedly, Allāh's hatred for you is worse than your hatred for yourselves."* Allāh detested them since their lives in this world. They will then be told the reason for Allāh's rejection of them. They will be told that it was because, *"When you were called towards belief, you disbelieved."*

Other commentators have interpreted *"your hatred for yourselves" to mean "your hatred for each other"*. On the Day of Judgment, the followers will curse their leaders in disbelief, and vice versa. Each will pin the blame on the other, neither willing to acknowledge his folly. By this interpretation, the verse will be similar to a verse of Surah Ankabūt, where the disbelievers are told, *"Soon, on the Day of Judgment, you will oppose each other and curse each other."* [Surah 29, verse 25]

"They (the disbelievers) will say, 'O our Lord! You gave us death twice and granted us life twice. " People will acknowledge that they were once lifeless entities in the backs of their fathers, which was their first death. Thereafter, Allāh instilled a soul in each person, bringing him/her to life. After passing through the various stages of development, every person tasted death and was buried. With the dawn of Judgment day, they will all be brought back to life, entering into a second physical life.

The disbelievers will declare that they ought to have believed in Allāh and should not have denied the advent of Judgment. They will say, *"We admit our sins, so is there any way to escape?" It* will now be impossible for them to prevent the punishment, and they will not be allowed a second chance to live in this world. The situation will be as described in Surah Sajdah, where Allāh quotes them as saying, *"O our Lord! We have seen and we have heard. Return us so that we may carry out good deeds. We are now certainly convinced."* [Surah 32, verse 12]

Allāh shall say to them, *"This is because you disbelieved each time that Allāh Alone was mentioned. However, you believed whenever partners were ascribed to Him. Judgement shall be for Allāh, the Exalted, the Great."* The disbelievers and polytheists disliked that Allāh should be referred to as The One and Only deity. However, whenever their idols were mentioned as partners to Allāh, they would be prepared to accept it as the truth. In the Hereafter, they will be reminded about their denial in this world. Of course, no amends can be made then, and they will be unable to escape the severe punishment of Hell.

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُرِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَيُنَزِّلُ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ رِزْقًا ۚ وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ إِلَّا مَن
يُنِيبُ ﴿١٣﴾ فَٱدْعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ رَفِيعُ
ٱلدَّرَجَٰتِ ذُو ٱلْعَرْشِ يُلْقِى ٱلرُّوحَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِۦ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ لِيُنذِرَ يَوْمَ
ٱلتَّلَاقِ ﴿١٥﴾ يَوْمَ هُم بَٰرِزُونَ ۖ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مِنْهُمْ شَىْءٌ ۚ لِّمَنِ ٱلْمُلْكُ ٱلْيَوْمَ ۖ لِلَّهِ ٱلْوَٰحِدِ
ٱلْقَهَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾ ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ۚ لَا ظُلْمَ ٱلْيَوْمَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿١٧﴾

(13) It is Allāh Who shows you His signs, and sends sustenance for you from the sky. Only he who turns to Allāh will heed. (14) So supplicate to Allāh, making all of religion exclusively for Him, even though the disbelievers dislike it. (15) The Exalter of ranks and the Owner of the Throne. By His command, He sends revelation to those bondsmen whom He wills, so that they warn about the Day of Meeting. (16) The day they will all come forward and nothing of theirs will be hidden from Allāh. "To Whom does all Kingdom belong today? To Allāh, the One, the Omnipotent." (17) On this day every soul shall be recompensed for what it earned. No injustice shall be done today! Verily, Allāh is Swift in Reckoning.

ALLĀH SENDS REVELATION TO WHOEVER HE PLEASES, NOTHING IS HIDDEN FROM HIM, AND ONLY HIS KINGSHIP SHALL REMAIN DOMIINANT

The above verses make mention of Allāh's favours, as well as His excellent attributes. Allāh begins, *"It is Allāh Who shows you His signs..."* Allāh shows many signs to man so that he may recognise Allāh's might and greatness. These signs clearly reveal to man that Allāh is One, and that He is the Creator and Master.

Allāh adds, *"and sends sustenance for you from the sky."* This verse depicts Allāh's might as well as His extreme benevolence towards His creation.

"Only he who turns to Allāh will heed (the many signs)." It is only these people who are able to effectively utilise their intelligence to accept the truth.

"So supplicate to Allāh, making all religion exclusively for Him (by not ascribing partners to Allāh), *even though the disbelievers dislike it."* One should remain steadfast in one's belief in oneness of Allāh, not once faltering in one's Belief. Naturally, those not subscribing to the same beliefs will take offence to this. However, their enmity should never be a cause for concern.

"The Exalter ranks... "Two interpretation have been given for this attribute of Allāh.

The first is that Allāh will elevate the ranks of His pious bondsmen in the Hereafter, in addition to defining a distinct status for them in this world. Allāh says in Surah Yusuf, *"We elevate the ranks of whomsoever We will."* A verse of Surah

Mujādala reads, *"Allāh shall elevate the believers among you and those given knowledge by many stages."* This interpretation seems most appropriate, even though the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that it is somewhat farfetched.

The second interpretation of this attribute is that Allāh is Himself Most Exalted in attributes.

Allāh says further that He is *"the Owner of the Throne. By His command, He sends revelation to those bondsmen whom He wills, so that they warn about the Day of Meeting."* Divine revelation has been referred to as 'rūh' (soul/life) because it gives life to a person's spirituality. Certain commentators have mentioned that 'rūh' refers to Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام, who conveys Allāh's commands to the Prophets عليهم السلام. The phrase *"to those bondsmen whom He wills"* indicates that Allāh specially selects people to be Prophet عليه السلام. Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Allāh selects messengers from the angels and from mankind."* The mantle of Prophet hood is not something that can be earned by a person's skill or aptitude. It is something commissioned only on the basis of Allāh's selection. Every Prophet from Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام to Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was hand picked by Allāh.

Allāh says that the purpose of the revelation He sent to the Prophets عليهم السلام was *"so that they warn* (people) *about the Day of Meeting."* This refers to the Day of Judgment, when people will meet Allāh on the Plains of Reckoning.

Referring to the Day of Judgment, Allāh says further, *"The day they will all come forward and nothing of theirs will be hidden from Allāh."* Allāh will announce, *"To Whom does all Kingdom belong today?"* All the rulers and monarchs of the world will be unable to reply because their temporary sovereignty would have been long since terminated. They will be totally helpless on that day. Finally, Allāh Himself shall reply that all kingdoms belong only *"To Allāh, the One, the Omnipotent."*

"On this day every soul shall be recompensed for what it earned (be it good or evil). No injustice shall be done today!" None shall be punished for what was not done, nor shall any be denied the full reward for a good deed. *"Verily, Allāh is Swift in Reckoning."* Allāh is Capable of reckoning with everyone at the same time, without the need to follow a sequence which keeps others waiting.

وَأَنذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْـَٔازِفَةِ إِذِ ٱلْقُلُوبُ لَدَى ٱلْحَنَاجِرِ كَـٰظِمِينَ ۚ مَا لِلظَّـٰلِمِينَ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ
وَلَا شَفِيعٍ يُطَاعُ (18) يَعْلَمُ خَآئِنَةَ ٱلْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِى ٱلصُّدُورُ (19) وَٱللَّهُ يَقْضِى
بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ لَا يَقْضُونَ بِشَىْءٍ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ
(20)

(18) Warn them about the pending day when hearts will be at the throats, slowly swallowing. The oppressors shall have no friend, nor any intercessor who will be obeyed. (19) Allāh knows the fraud of the eyes, and what the hearts conceal.

(20) Allāh passes judgement with justice. Those that they worship besides Allāh cannot pass judgement in any affair. Verily, only Allāh is the All Hearing, the All Seeing.

WARN THEM OF THE DAY WHEN HEARTS WILL REACH THE THROATS AND THE OPPRESSORS WILL HAVE NEITHER FRIENDS NOR INTERCESSORS

These verses also describe the scene of Judgment day. Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Warn them about the pending day..."* The Judgment day is described as a fast approaching day which will inevitably occur. Allāh says that on the Day of Judgment, *"hearts will be at the throats, slowly swallowing."* It will seem as if their hearts are stuck in their throats, choking them. In this condition, they will suffer great distress and grief.

"The oppressors shall have no friend, nor any intercessor who will be obeyed." This refers to the people who in this world expected that their friends and intercessors will save them on the Day of Judgment day. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that *"oppressors"* refers to the disbelievers because they can truly be described as *"oppressors"*

ALLĀH IS AWARE OF THE FRAUD THAT THE EYES PERPETRATE, AS WELL AS EVERYTHING IN THE HEART

"Allāh knows the fraud of the eyes, and what the hearts conceal." Allāh is well aware of the movements of every physical limb, as well as the matters that are concealed within the heart. Allāh knows the beliefs, intentions and inclinations that every heart contains. No person should think that he will not be taken to task for what he conceals. The *'fraud"* of the eyes refers to using the eyes for Unlawful purposes. These include looking at strange women, as well as winking at someone when backbiting about another. These are all sins, which Allāh is aware of, even though they are unknown to people.

Sayyidina Umm Ma'bid رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to make the following Supplication:

{**TRANSLATION:** *"O Allāh! Purify my heart from hypocrisy, my actions from ostentation, my tongue from lies, and my eyes from fraud. Verily, You have knowledge of the fraud of the eyes and whatever hearts conceal."*} *["Mishkāt" p. 220]*

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"Allāh passes judgement with justice. Those that they worship besides Allāh cannot pass judgement in any affair. Verily, only Allāh is the All Hearing, the All Seeing."*

۞ أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوا
هُمْ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَآثَارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ
مِن وَاقٍ ﴿٢١﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانَت تَّأْتِيهِمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَكَفَرُوا فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ

(21) Do they not travel on earth, so they may see what was the plight of those before them? Those people were more powerful than them in terms of strength, and in terms of the landmarks they left behind on earth. Nevertheless, Allāh seized them on account of their sins. They had none to protect them against Allāh. (22) This was because Our messengers used to come to them with clear signs, but they disbelieved. So Allāh seized them. Undoubtedly, He is Powerful, Severe in punishment.

DO PEOPLE NOT TRAVEL TO SEE HOW ALLĀH DESTROYED THOSE BEFORE THEM WHO WERE FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN THEMSELVES?

The polytheists of Makkah used to mock the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he warned them about Allāh's punishment. This was in spite of the fact that twice annually, as they travelled to Shām for trade, they passed by the ruins of former nations. Reminding them of this, Allāh says, *"Do they not travel on earth, so they may see what was the plight of those before them? Those people (like the Ād and Thamud) were more powerful than them in terms of strength, and in terms of the landmarks they left behind on earth."*

The previous nations were physically stronger than those after them, and they even constructed architectural masterpieces, which stand to this day, although in ruins. Their folly was that they rejected the preaching of the Prophets عليهم السلام. Therefore, despite their strength and skills, *"Allāh seized them on account of their sins. They had none to protect them against Allāh."* Another verse quotes the Ād as saying, *"Who can be more powerful than us?"* However, their strength was useless to them when Allāh's punishment arrived. They were left utterly devastated.

Allāh says further, *"This (punishment) was because Our messengers used to come to them with clear signs, but they disbelieved. So Allāh seized them. Undoubtedly, He is Powerful, Severe in punishment."* How can anyone protect themselves against Him? It is therefore necessary that people learn lessons from the events of the past.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا وَسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ (23) إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَقَارُونَ
فَقَالُوا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ (24) فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُم بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ عِندِنَا قَالُوا اقْتُلُوا أَبْنَاءَ
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ وَاسْتَحْيُوا نِسَاءَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا كَيْدُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ
(25) وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ذَرُونِي أَقْتُلْ مُوسَىٰ وَلْيَدْعُ رَبَّهُ ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَن يُبَدِّلَ دِينَكُمْ
أَوْ أَن يُظْهِرَ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْفَسَادَ (26) وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي عُذْتُ بِرَبِّي وَرَبِّكُم مِّن
كُلِّ مُتَكَبِّرٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُ بِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ (27)

(23) Verily, We sent Mūsa with Our signs and a clear proof... (24) ...to Pharaoh (Fir'aun), Hāmān and Qārūn. They said, "He is a magician and a liar." (25) When he came to them with the truth from Us, they said, "Kill the Sons of those who believe in him and keep their women alive." The schemes of the disbelievers are ever lost. (26) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "Leave me to kill Mūsa, and he should call for his Lord. I fear that he may change your religion, or that he may spread anarchy on earth." (27) Mūsa said, "I seek the protection of my Lord and your Lord from every haughty person who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning."

ALLĀH SENDS SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام TO PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)*, HĀMĀN AND QĀRŪN, AND PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* THREATENS TO KILL HIM

After making a reference to the previously destroyed nations, Allāh discusses the incident of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*. This Surah covers the entire incident up to the eventual drowning of pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his army. The epic also includes the advice that a believer from Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* court gave to the others.

Allāh says, *"Verily, We sent Mūsa with Our signs* (miracles) *and* (with) *a clear proof to pharaoh (Fir'aun), Hāmān and Qārūn."* Despite witnessing these miracles, they remained obstinate and said, *"He is a magician and a liar."* Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام ignored their insults and continued to propagate the truth. People gradually accepted his religion, and their numbers began to increase. To stem the tide of converts, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his advisors urgently convened a meeting. It was then that they decided to *"Kill the sons of those who believe in him and keep their women alive."* They therefore resolved to repeat what they did when pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was initially warned that a child from the Bani Isrā'īl would be responsible for the destruction of his kingdom.

However, despite their plots, they were not successful in restraining the rise of popularity that the religion of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام enjoyed. In this regard Allāh says, *"The schemes of the disbelievers are ever lost."*

"Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, 'Leave me to kill Mūsa, and he should call for his Lord (for help when I am about to kill him). I fear that he may change your religion, or that he may spread anarchy on earth." When pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* expressed that he wished to assassinate Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, his courtiers advised him not to do so since it would make people think that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was killed because pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was unable to respond to his arguments. However, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* felt that the death of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was the only way in which his kingdom could be preserved.

When pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام should call on his Lord for assistance, he was, merely boasting about his power. In reality, he was terrified of Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام curse. He meant the statement to be a jeer.

In an effort to lend credibility to his stance, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* told his people, *"I fear that he may change your religion, or that he may spread anarchy on earth."* He intended to convince the people of the fact that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه

السلام and his followers will soon pose a threat to the stability of Egypt, by attempting to assume control of the land. It is 'a common practice of worldly-minded people to violently subdue their adversaries. They swiftly kill any opposition so that they are able to continue their reign of tyranny. In addition to this, they convince the people that they are acting in the best interests of the state.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام learnt of the plot to assassinate him, he said, *"I seek the protection of my Lord and your Lord from every haughty person who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning."* In making this Supplication, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام made it clear to the people that Allāh, who is their Lord as well, shall offer protection against every haughty disbeliever. Therefore, they should never fear the threats of the disbelievers.

وَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ مِّنْ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ إِيمَـٰنَهُۥٓ أَتَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلًا أَن يَقُولَ رَبِّىَ ٱللَّهُ وَقَدْ جَآءَكُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ وَإِن يَكُ كَـٰذِبًا فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهُۥ ۖ وَإِن يَكُ صَادِقًا يُصِبْكُم بَعْضُ ٱلَّذِى يَعِدُكُمْ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ يَـٰقَوْمِ لَكُمُ ٱلْمُلْكُ ٱلْيَوْمَ ظَـٰهِرِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَمَن يَنصُرُنَا مِنۢ بَأْسِ ٱللَّهِ إِن جَآءَنَا ۚ قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ مَآ أُرِيكُمْ إِلَّا مَآ أَرَىٰ وَمَآ أَهْدِيكُمْ إِلَّا سَبِيلَ ٱلرَّشَادِ ﴿٢٩﴾

(28) A believing man from pharaoh's (Fir'aun's) people, who concealed his belief, said, "Will you kill a man for saying 'Allāh is my Lord', when he has brought the truth to you from your Lord? If he is lying, then his lies shall be to his own detriment. However, If he is truthful, a part of what he has prophesised shall afflict you. Verily, Allāh does not guide him who transgresses the limits and is a liar." (29) "O my people! You have sovereignty today, and are dominant on earth. But who can assist us against Allāh 's punishment when it comes to us?" Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "I am suggesting to you only what I regard to be correct, and I am guiding you only towards the path of guidance."

THE TRUTH SPOKEN BY A PERSON FROM PHARAOH'S *(FIR'AUN'S)* PEOPLE

The above verses speak about a person from pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* people who accepted the message of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, just as Fir'aun's wife did. However, he concealed his belief. Certain commentators are of the opinion that this person was the son of pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* paternal uncle, who was earmarked to be pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* successor to the throne of Egypt. At that time, he was the commander of the army.

Unlike pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* other courtiers, he did not simply agree with what pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said. He explained to them that the plot to assassinate Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was foolish because they would be killing a person who

was innocent of all crimes. All that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام did was to proclaim the truth and to say that Allāh was his Lord. This was not a punishable offence, let alone deserving the death warrant. In addition to this, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام also proved his declarations to them by means of miracles.

The person explained to them further, saying, *"If he* [Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام] *is lying, then his lies shall be to his own detriment* (i.e. he will suffer the punishment in this world)." Therefore, he bade them not to have the blood of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام on their hands if he is bound to be destroyed. However, he then pointed out the other dimension to them, saying, *"However, if he is fruitful, a part of what (punishment) he has prophesised shall afflict you" i.e.* he warned you that Allāh's punishment will afflict you if you do not believe, and if you indulge in sin. Accordingly, Allāh's' punishment should be expected in this world and in the Hereafter.

Continuing his talk, the person said, *"Verily, Allāh does not guide him who transgresses the limits and is a liar."* By making this statement, the man impressed upon the minds of his audience that Allāh would have never supported Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام by granting him miracles if Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام were lying about being a Prophet. He also alluded to the fact that pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was a transgressor because he wanted to kill an innocent person, thereby promoting widespread anarchy and strife on earth. He also intended to convey the message that pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was a liar because he claimed to be Allāh. Allāh will therefore not allow his schemes to materialise.

Addressing the people further, the believer said, *"O my people! You have sovereignty today, and are dominant on earth. But who can assist us against Allāh 's punishment when it comes to us?"* In the guise of a question, he wisely sounded a warning to the people. He made them aware of the fact that their kingdom and vast riches will be useless against Allāh's punishment.

Fearing that the message of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام may gain momentum, thereby crushing his rule, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* said, *'I am suggesting to you only what I regard to be correct, and I am guiding you only towards the path of guidance."* By saying this, he tried to convince the people that his plot to kill Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was the best and most effective solution.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِىٓ ءَامَنَ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُم مِّثْلَ يَوْمِ ٱلْأَحْزَابِ (30) مِثْلَ دَأْبِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ ۚ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعِبَادِ (31) وَيَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلتَّنَادِ (32) يَوْمَ تُوَلُّونَ مُدْبِرِينَ مَا لَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ ۗ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِنْ هَادٍ (33)

(30) The one who believed said, "O my people! I fear that you may suffer the day of the previous nations..." (31) like the plight of the nation of Nūh, Ād, Thamud, and those after them. Allāh never wills injustice for His bondsmen." (32) "O my people! Verily I fear the day of Calling for you..." (33) "....the day

when you will turn back on your heels, and there shall be none to protect you from Allāh. There can be no guide for the one whom Allāh sends astray."

THE BELIEVER REMINDS HIS PEOPLE ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF FORMER NATIONS AND ABOUT THE FRIGHTFUL DAY OF JUDGMENT

Warning his people further, the believer said, *"O my people! I fear that* (if you continue to oppose Allāh's Prophet as you are doing) *you may suffer the day* (punishment) *of the previous* (destroyed) *nations, like the plight of the nation of Nūh, Ād, Thamud, and those after them.* " All these nations suffered destruction when they refused to obey Allāh. *"Allāh never wills injustice for His bondsmen."* All these nations were destroyed on account of the wrongs they perpetrated. It can never be said that Allāh was ever unjust to anyone.

Addressing his people further, he reminded them that they will not live forever. He said, *"O my people! Verily I fear the day of Calling for you."* Here he refers to the Day of Judgment, when much calling will take place. The first call will take place after the trumpet is blown for the first time. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"The day when a caller shall call from a near place."* Thereafter, because there will be many groups of people present, each shall be summoned by the names of their leaders. Allāh says, *"The day when We shall call every person by his religious leader (Imām)."*

When the righteous people will be given their records of deeds in their right hands, they will call out, *"Come and read my record!"* On the Day of Judgment, the people of Heaven, Hell and A'rāf will also be calling out to each other, as mentioned in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 44-51*].

"The day when you will turn back on your heels... "i.e. you will turn away from the Plain of Resurrection, and head for Hell [*Ma'ālimut Tanzīl*]. When Allāh will decree that people should be dispatched to Hell, none will be able to escape Allāh's punishment, and none shall come to their aid.

Eventually, losing hope for the people around him, the believer person said, *"There can be no guide for the one whom Allāh sends astray."*

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ يُوسُفُ مِن قَبْلُ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَمَا زِلْتُمْ فِى شَكٍّ مِّمَّا جَآءَكُم بِهِۦ حَتَّىٰٓ
إِذَا هَلَكَ قُلْتُمْ لَن يَبْعَثَ ٱللَّهُ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ رَسُولًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَنْ هُوَ
مُسْرِفٌ مُّرْتَابٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُجَٰدِلُونَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ سُلْطَٰنٍ أَتَىٰهُمْ ۖ كَبُرَ
مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَعِندَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ قَلْبِ مُتَكَبِّرٍ
جَبَّارٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

(34) Without doubt, Yusuf عليه السلام came to you with clear signs, but you remained in constant doubt about what he brought to you. Until the time came

when he passed away, then you said, "Allāh shall never ever send a messenger after him. Thus does Allāh send astray him who transgresses the limits and is sceptical..." (35) Those who dispute about Allāh's verses without any warrant coming to them. This is extremely detestable in the sight of Allāh and those who believe. Thus does Allāh set a seal on the heart of every haughty and tyrannical person."

THE DEVIATION OF THOSE WHO DOUBT, AND THE SEAL UPON THE HEARTS OF THE HAUGHTY ONES

The believers already reminded his people about the previously destroyed nations who refused to believe in their Prophets عليهم السلام. In the above verse, he specifically mentions one of the Prophet عليه السلام who lived in Egypt, viz. Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. He said to them, *"Without doubt, Yusuf* عليه السلام *came to you with clear signs, but you remained in constant doubt about what he brought to you. Until the time came when he passed away, then you said,* '(If he was Allāh's true messenger, then) *Allāh shall never ever send a messenger after him. Thus does Allāh send astray him who transgresses the limits and is sceptical.'"* When doubt and scepticism become a person's habit, he is reluctant to accept anything, even though it be the truth. In this manner, Allāh sends him astray.

Further describing the transgressors and sceptics, he said that they are *"Those who dispute about Allāh's verses without any warrant coming to them. This (type of behaviour) is extremely detestable in the sight of Allāh and (in the sight of) those who believe."*

He further told them that they disbelieve because Allāh has certainly set a seal on their hearts, just as He has *"set a seal on the heart of every haughty and tyrannical person."* Such people will not accept the truth because it will not penetrate the seal on their hearts.

NOTE: The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has written that the Yusuf عليه السلام mentioned in the verse refers to the son of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام. Leaving his native land of Kan'ān, he arrived in Egypt where he soon became a leader. Therefore, the phrase *"came to you with clear signs"* will mean that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام came to the forefathers of the people he was addressing at that time.

Other commentators are of the opinion that the Yusuf mentioned in the Qur'ānic verse is the grandson of the famous Prophet Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. Allāh also made him a Prophet , and he lived among the Egyptians for twenty years. However, the people doubted his Prophet hood. Allāh knows best.

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَٰهَٰمَٰنُ ٱبْنِ لِى صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّىٓ أَبْلُغُ ٱلْأَسْبَٰبَ (36) أَسْبَٰبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
فَأَطَّلِعَ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّى لَأَظُنُّهُۥ كَٰذِبًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِفِرْعَوْنَ سُوٓءُ عَمَلِهِۦ
وَصُدَّ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۚ وَمَا كَيْدُ فِرْعَوْنَ إِلَّا فِى تَبَابٍ (37)

(36) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "O Hāmān, build a tower for me so that I may reach the roads... (37) ". . . (That I may reach) The roads of the heavens so that I can have a close look at the deity of Mūsa. I strongly feel that he is a liar." In this manner the evil of his deeds was made appealing to pharaoh (Fir'aun), and he was prevented from the path. The scheme of pharaoh (Fir'aun) led only to destruction.

PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* COMMISSIONS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TOWER, BUT HIS SCHEMES SERVE ONLY TO DESTROY HIM

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام conveyed the message to pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, he threatened to kill Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, and made many arrogant statements to flatter the audience. One of these statements was that he commanded his aide Hāmān to construct a high tower so that he may take a look at Allāh. Such is the condition of those who merely pose as gods. They require things like towers and staircases to ascend to heights. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* issued the command merely to deceive and impress the people. Reference to this command has already been made in Surah Qasas, where Allāh quotes pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* saying, *"O Hāmān! Kindle for me a fire on sand, then construct a tower for me so that I may get a peek at Mūsa's Lord. I strongly feel that he is from the liars."* [*Surah 28, verse 38*]

Allāh says further, *"In this manner the evil of his deeds was made appealing to pharaoh (Fir'aun), and he was prevented from the path. The scheme of pharaoh (Fir'aun) led only to destruction."* Eventually, pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was drowned along with his entire army.

Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"So pharaoh (Fir'aun) followed them with his army and there covered them that of the sea that did cover them. Pharaoh (Fir'aun) misled his nation and never guided."* [*Surah 20, verses 78 and 79*]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِىٓ ءَامَنَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱتَّبِعُونِ أَهْدِكُمْ سَبِيلَ ٱلرَّشَادِ (38) يَٰقَوْمِ إِنَّمَا
هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا مَتَٰعٌ وَإِنَّ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ هِىَ دَارُ ٱلْقَرَارِ (39) مَنْ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةً
فَلَا يُجْزَىٰٓ إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا ۖ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (40) ۞ وَيَٰقَوْمِ مَا لِىٓ
أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى ٱلنَّجَوٰةِ وَتَدْعُونَنِىٓ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ (41) تَدْعُونَنِى لِأَكْفُرَ بِٱللَّهِ
وَأُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ مَا لَيْسَ لِى بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ وَأَنَا۠ أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْغَفَّٰرِ (42) لَا جَرَمَ
أَنَّمَا تَدْعُونَنِىٓ إِلَيْهِ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ دَعْوَةٌ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ مَرَدَّنَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
وَأَنَّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ هُمْ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ (43) فَسَتَذْكُرُونَ مَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ ۚ
وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِىٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ (44) فَوَقَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِ مَا

مَكَرُوا وَحَاقَ بِآلِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٥﴾ النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا
وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾

(38) The one who believed said, "O my people! Follow me and I shall lead you to the path of guidance." (39) "O my people.' This worldly life is a trivial gain. Undoubtedly the Hereafter is really a place to live." (40) "Whoever perpetrates a sin shall be punished only for it. Whoever, male or female, carries out a good deed as a believer shall enter Heaven, where they will be sustained without restriction." (41) "O my people! How is it that I call you towards salvation, whereas you call me towards the Fire?" (42) "You call me to disbelieve in Allāh and to ascribe such partners to Him for which I have no justification. On the other hand, I am calling you towards the Mighty, the Most Forgiving." (43) "It is a fact that those towards whom you call me have no claim in this world or in the Hereafter. Our return shall certainly be to Allāh, and the transgressors will be the inmates of the Fire." (44) "You shall soon recall what I am telling you. I surrender my affairs to Allāh. Allāh is definitely Watchful over His bondsmen." (45) So Allāh saved him from the evils of the plots they made, and a terrible punishment enveloped the people of phara'oh (Fir'aun). (46) They will be presented before the Fire morning and evening. And, on the day that Judgment will take place, (they will be told) "Enter the people of phara'oh (Fir'aun) into the worst of punishments."

THE BELIEVING MAN TURNS REMINDS THE PEOPLE ABOUT THE TRANSIENT NATURE OF THIS WORLD AND THE PERMANENCE OF THE HEREAFTER

After listening to the ramblings of phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* about getting a look at Allāh from a tower, the believer said, *"O my people! Follow me and I shall lead you to the path of guidance."* He encouraged them to believe in Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام just as he believed. People are averse to believing because they fear a loss of their worldly belongings and position. Therefore, the believer impressed upon them that this world is temporary and not worthy of hankering after. He told them, *"O my people! This worldly life is a trivial gain. Undoubtedly the Hereafter is really a place to live."*

He further told them, *"Whoever perpetrates a sin shall be punished only for it. Whoever, male or female, carries out a good deed as a believer shall enter Heaven, where they will be sustained without restriction."* Whereas the punishment for sins will be proportionate to the sins, the reward for good deeds will far surpass the actual value of the deed.

He said, *"O my people! How is it that I call you towards salvation, whereas you call me towards the Fire?"* He was calling them towards actions that would lead to Heaven, whereas they called him towards disbelief, polytheism and all other acts that would take them to Hell. He further added, *"You call me to disbelieve in Allāh and to ascribe such partners to Him for which I have no justification."* Referring to himself, he impressed upon them that they have no justification for perpetrating polytheism.

"On the other hand, I am calling you towards (my Allāh, Who is) the Mighty, the Most Forgiving." In saying thifs, he conveyed the message that if they refuse to believe, Allāh has the might to punish them. However, if they repent and believe, Allāh will certainly forgive them.

"It is a fact that those (gods) towards whom you call me have no claim in this world or in the Hereafter." He told them that their gods have no authority in either world. They are unable to hear an invocation. They cannot even say 'yes' or 'no' to a plea, let alone being able to do any harm or good.

He advised them further saying, *"Our return shall certainly be to Allāh, and the transgressors will be the inmates of the Fire."* In this manner, he told them that they were transgressors, and needed to mend their ways before Allāh condemns them to an eternity in Hell.

"You shall soon recall what I am telling you. I surrender my affairs to Allāh. Allāh is definitely Watchful over His, bondsmen." Hereby he informed them that he totally relied on Allāh, Who would protect him from their evil plots.

ALLĀH RESCUES THE BELIEVER AND THE PEOPLE OF PHARA'OH *(FIR'AUN)*

When the believer pinned his trust in Allāh, Allāh complied by keeping him safe from the schemes of the disbelievers. Allāh says, *"So Allāh saved him from the evils of the plots they made, and a terrible punishment enveloped the people of* phara'oh *(Fir'aun)."* Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and his entire army were drowned in the sea. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* issued a warrant of execution against the believer referred to above. As a result, the Believer left for the mountains. Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* dispatched a thousand men to capture him, and they finally found him performing Salāh. Allāh ensured his safety by making wild animals attack the group, killing many of them. Others died of thirst in the mountains, and a few managed to return to Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)*. However, Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* had them all killed because he believed that they purposely allowed the believer to escape.

"They will be presented before the Fire morning and evening. - After being drowned, Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and his men entered the realm of Barzakh (the intermediate stage between this world and the Hereafter). Each night and day in Barzakh, they will suffer the torment of Hell. They will also be reminded that *"on the day that Judgment day will take place (they will be told) 'Enter the people of phara'oh (Fir'aun) into the worst of punishments.'"* They will suffer the true punishment of Hell in the Hereafter.

PUNISHMENT IN THE GRAVE

The Ahadīth make mention of punishment in the grave for the disbelievers and sinners. The following two verses of the Qur'ān also mention the same fact:

"They will be presented before the Fire morning and evening."

"Because of their sins they were drowned and made to enter the Fire." [*Surah Nūh (71), verse 25*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "When any of you pass away,

his abode in the Hereafter will be shown to him every morning and evening. If he is from the people of Heaven, he will be shown his place in Heaven. If he is from the inmates of Hell, he will shown his place in Hell. It will be said to them, 'That is your true abode. You shall remain here (in the grave) until Allāh resurrects you on the Day of Judgment to enter there." [*"Mishkāt" p. 25, from Bukhari and Muslim*]

وَإِذْ يَتَحَاجُّونَ فِي النَّارِ فَيَقُولُ الضُّعَفَاءُ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا
لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ النَّارِ ﴿٤٧﴾ قَالَ الَّذِينَ
اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُلٌّ فِيهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ حَكَمَ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ
فِي النَّارِ لِخَزَنَةِ جَهَنَّمَ ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ يُخَفِّفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٩﴾ قَالُوا
أَوَلَمْ تَكُ تَأْتِيكُمْ رُسُلُكُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَالُوا فَادْعُوا وَمَا دُعَاءُ
الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

(47) Remember the time when they will dispute with each other in the Fire. Then the weak ones will say to the haughty ones, "Verily we were your followers, so can you remove a portion of the Fire from us?" (48) The haughty ones will say, "We are all together in the Fire. Allāh has already passed judgement between His bondsmen." (49) The people in Hell will say to the keepers of Hell, "Supplicate to your Lord to lessen a day of the punishment for us." (50) They (the keepers) will ask, "Did your messengers not come to you with clear signs?" The people will reply, "Certainly." The keepers will then say, "Then you supplicate. The supplication of the disbelievers is lost."

THE PEOPLE OF HELL WILL ARGUE AND PIN THE BLAME ON EACH OTHER

In this world there are those who pander to the wishes of their leaders with great enthusiasm. In their obedience to their leaders, they even oppose the Prophet عليه السلام and forbid others from listening to these chosen servants of Allāh. However, when such people suffer the tortures of Hell, they will become sworn enemies of each other. The followers will say to their leaders, *"Verily we were your followers, so can you remove a portion of the Fire from us?"* Unable to help even themselves, their leaders will reply, *"We are all together in the Fire. Allāh has already passed judgement between His bondsmen."* Since the decision of eternal damnation will have been passed, none will be of any avail to another.

A similar dispute is mentioned in Surah Ibrahīm, where the leaders reply, *"If Allāh had guided us, we would have guided you. It makes no difference whether we vent our anxiety or we exercise patience. We have no escape."* [*Surah 14, verse 21*]

THE INMATES OF HELL APPEAL TO THE KEEPERS OF HELL TO SUPPLICATE TO ALLĀH FOR MITIGATION

In an effort to relieve their punishment, the people of Hell will appeal to the keepers of Hell saying, *"Supplicate to your Lord to lessen a day of the punishment for us."* In response to this plea, the keepers will remind them of the reason for their entry in Hell. They will ask, *"Did your messengers not come to you with clear signs (which you denied)?' The people will reply, 'Certainly.' The keepers will then say, 'Then you supplicate (because we cannot intercede on behalf of the guilty). The supplication of the disbelievers is lost.'"* All their supplications will be ignored, just as they ignored the repeated messages of the Prophets عليهم السلام.

إِنَّا لَنَنصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ ﴿51﴾ يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعْذِرَتُهُمْ ۖ وَلَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ ﴿52﴾

(51) We shall definitely assist Our messengers and those who believe in this worldly life as well as on the Day when witnesses will stand. (52) The day when the excuses of the oppressors will not benefit them, when they will be cursed and have the worst of abodes.

ALLĀH PROMISES ASSISTANCE FOR HIS MESSENGERS AND THE BELIEVERS

Allāh declares, *"We shall definitely assist Our messengers and those who believe in this worldly life as well as on the Day when witnesses will stand."* Allāh assures the Prophets عليهم السلام and the believers that they will certainly be granted assistance in this very world. Whereas the assistance is a certainty, there may sometimes be a delay in the arrival of Allāh's assistance. This delay is based on Allāh's infinite wisdom. One of the reasons is to grant temporary relief to the disbelievers so that they excel in their disobedience and rebellion. As a result of this, they are taken to task and punished much more severely (even in this very world).

The *"witnesses"* refer to the angels, who will testify that the Prophets عليهم السلام conveyed the message they were entrusted with, and that the disbelievers refused to believe in them.

Allāh says further, *"The day when the excuses of the oppressors will not benefit them, when they will be cursed and have the worst of abodes* (in Hell)."

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْهُدَىٰ وَأَوْرَثْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ ﴿53﴾ هُدًى وَذِكْرَىٰ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿54﴾ فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنبِكَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ ﴿55﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي آيَاتِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ سُلْطَانٍ أَتَاهُمْ ۙ إِن فِي صُدُورِهِمْ إِلَّا كِبْرٌ مَّا هُم

(53) Verily We gave guidance to Mūsa and made the Bani Isrā'īl inheritors of the Book... (54) "... which is a guidance and advice for those with intelligence. (55) So be patient! Allāh's promise is certainly the truth. Seek forgiveness for your errors, and glorify the praises of your Lord morning and evening. (56) There is only pride in the hearts of those who dispute about Allāh's verses without any warrant that has come to them. They shall never reach (their aspirations). So seek refuge with Allāh. Undoubtedly, only He is the All Hearing, All Seeing.

THE COMMAND TO SEEK ALLĀH'S FORGIVENESS AND TO GLORIFY HIM AND PRAISE HIM

Allāh briefly mentions Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and the Bani Isrā'īl when He says, *"Verily We gave guidance to Mūsa and made the Bani Isrā'īl inheritors of the Book, which is a guidance and advice for those with intelligence."* However, the Bani Isrā'īl did not appreciate the great boon they were granted, but remained obstinate and continued to harass Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Therefore, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام had to exercise patience with them.

Instructing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to follow suit, Allāh says, *"So be patient! Allāh's promise is certainly the truth. (However, if there has to be any deficiency in your patience, then) Seek forgiveness for your errors (because this is not befitting a Prophet of your calibre), and glorify the praises of your Lord morning and evening."*

THERE IS PRIDE IN THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO DISPUTE ABOUT ALLĀH'S VERSES

Allāh says, *"There is only pride in the hearts of those who dispute about Allāh's verses without any warrant that has come to them."* Besotted with themselves, they anticipate that they will have whatever they want. They expect to assume power over all others. However, Allāh says, *"They shall never reach* (their aspirations)." Thereafter, Allāh advises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"So seek refuge with Allāh. Undoubtedly, only He is the All Hearing, All Seeing."*

Ma'ālimut Tanzīl reports that the above verse was revealed with reference to the Jews. They told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they will regain their lost kingdom and glory when their Messiah Dajjāl arrives. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"There is only pride in the hearts of those who dispute about Allāh 's verses without any warrant that has come to them. They shall never reach (their aspirations)."* Allāh then instructs people to seek His protection. By doing so, a person will be safeguarded from Dajjāl.

لَخَلْقُ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ خَلْقِ النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ (57) وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَلَا الْمُسِيءُ قَلِيلًا مَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ (58) إِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَآتِيَةٌ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا

وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (59)

(57) The creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater feat than the creation of mankind, but most people do not know. (58) The blind and seeing cannot be equal, neither can those who believe and do good deeds be equal to the sinners. Little is it that they take heed. (59) There is indeed no doubt in the fact that Judgment day is imminent. However, most people do not believe.

THE BLIND AND THE SIGHTED CANNOT BE THE SAME, JUST AS THE RIGHTEOUS BELIEVERS AND EVIL SINNERS CANNOT BE THE SAME

The above verses dispel the doubts harboured by those who deny the advent of Judgment day. Many people foolishly deny Judgment day because they regard resurrection as something farfetched. Allāh draws their attention to the fact that He is perfectly Capable of creating enormous phenomena like the heavens and the earth. Therefore, it will be absolutely simple for Him to enact the relatively easy feat of resurrecting people for the Day of Judgment. This entails the simple task of restoring the already existing soul to its physical body. Simple as it is to understand, *"most people do not know."*

Allāh asserts, *"The blind and seeing cannot be equal (which is obvious); (in a similar manner) neither can those who believe and do good deeds be equal to the sinners. Little is it that they take heed."* After one has digested this fact, one will realise that the good will have to be granted their due rewards, while the evil ones deserve to be punished. It is for this reason that Judgment day is certain. Therefore, Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, there is no doubt in the fact that Judgment of day is imminent. However, most people do not believe."*

(60) Your Lord says, "Supplicate to Me, I shall respond. Verily, those who are too proud to worship Me shall soon enter Hell in humiliation."

THE COMMAND TO MAKE SUPPLICATION AND THE PROMISE OF ACCEPTANCE

Allāh promises, *"Supplicate to Me, I shall respond."* Allāh is extremely Bountiful by allowing man the privilege of making supplication to Him and also promising a response to their supplication. The unique ecstasy experienced by means of supplication can be experienced only by those who are truly aware of the etiquette of supplication.

Supplication is great form of worship, as indicated by the concluding words of the above verse where Allāh says, *"Verily, those who are too proud to worship (supplicate to) Me shall soon enter Hell in humiliation."*

THE IMPORTANCE AND VIRTUE OF SUPPLICATION

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "supplication is the essence of all worship." [*"Mishkāt" p. 194*] The Arabic word "mukh" (translated above as "essence") refers to whatever is contained within a peel or shell. When an almond shell is opened, the almond itself is valued, while the shell remains worthless.

Supplication is not only an extremely fundamental act of worship (Ibādah), but it is the very essence of all forms of worship *(Ibādah)*. The purpose of worship *(Ibādah)* is to express one's helplessness and dependency to Allāh. When a person engages in worship *(Ibādah)*, his external self and internal self are humble in Allāh's court. Since supplication entails a great expression of humility, it is regarded as the essence and marrow of all forms of worship *(Ibādah)*.

When making supplication, a person admits his dependence on Allāh, and places his needs before Allāh with the conviction that no other can assist him. He acknowledges the fact that only Allāh can give him what he requires, and that none can prevent Allāh from fulfilling his needs. Realising all of this, he stretches his hands before Allāh, thereby expressing the deepest humility and dependence. This becomes a form of Ibādah, attracting Allāh's pleasure.

As for the person who does not want to make supplication, he regards it below his dignity to beg of Allāh, indicating that he is filled with pride. Allāh is therefore extremely angry with such a person.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Nothing is more honourable than supplication in Allāh's sight." [*"Mishkāt" p. 194, from Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "Allāh becomes angry with the person who does not ask from Him." [*"Mishkāt" p. 195*]

Supplication is the simplest and most effective manner of securing safety from all difficulties. It does not require any effort of the hands and feet nor any investment of wealth. Each person needs to do is keep his mind attentive and make supplication. Supplication is possible for the rich, the poor, the ill, the healthy, the traveller, the male, the female, the old and the young. It can be practised individually or collectively.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Never fail to make supplication because none can ever be destroyed with supplication." [*Targhīb wat Tarhīb*]

About those who regard Supplication to be below their dignity, Allāh says, *"Verily, those who are too proud to worship (make Supplication to) Me shall soon enter Hell in humiliation."* It is unfortunate that people attach importance only to the things of this world, because of which they are totally oblivious of what they say in their Supplication. They merely raise their hands as a formality, unaware of the etiquette and presence of mind required for this great worship *(Ibādah)*. I have written a booklet about the virtues of Supplication, which may be referred to for further details.

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا۟ فِيهِ وَٱلنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَذُو
فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
رَبُّكُمْ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ يُؤْفَكُ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا
وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بِنَآءً وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُوَرَكُمْ وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ
ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ فَتَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾ هُوَ ٱلْحَىُّ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ فَٱدْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ ۗ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

(61) It is Allāh Who has made the night for you to rest, and has made the day for you to see. Without doubt, Allāh is the Granter of Grace to mankind, but most people are ungrateful (62) This is Allāh, your Lord, the Creator of everything. None besides Him is worthy of worship, so whence are you wandering? (63) Thus did those who rejected Allāh's verses wander (astray). (64) It is Allāh Who made the earth a stable abode for you, and the skies a roof (It is He) Who fashioned you, beautified your appearances, and sustained you with pure things. This is Allāh, your Lord. So blessed is Allāh, the Lord of the universe. (65) He is the Living, besides Whom no other deserves to be worshipped. So pray to Him, devoting worship solely to Him. All praise is for Allāh, the Lord of the universe.

ALLĀH IS THE CREATOR OF THE EARTH, THE SKIES, THE NIGHT, THE DAY, AND EVERYTHING ELSE

Discussing His bounties and creative power, Allāh declares, *"It is Allāh Who has made the night for you to rest, and has made the day for you to see (to comfortably earn your sustenance). Without doubt, Allāh is the Granter of Grace to mankind..."* As a result of this, man ought to be grateful to Allāh. However, *"most people are ungrateful."*

"This is Allāh, your Lord, the Creator of everything. None besides Him is worthy of worship, so whence are you wandering? Thus did those who rejected Allāh's verses wander (astray)." Rejecting Allāh's signs and verses causes people to fall prey to their carnal passions and the guile of Satan.

Allāh then recounts some of His favours upon mankind when He says, *'It is Allāh Who made the earth a stable abode for you, and the skies a roof"* Allāh has created the earth in such a manner that (despite the tremendous speed of rotation and orbit) people are not shaken about and flung off.

Furthermore, *"(It is He) Who fashioned you, beautified your appearances, and sustained you with pure things (to eat drink, and wear). This is Allāh, your Lord. So blessed is Allāh, the Lord of the universe. He is the Living, besides Whom no other deserves to be worshipped. So pray to Him, devoting worship solely to Him. All praise is*

for Allāh, the Lord of the universe."

۞ قُلْ إِنِّي نُهِيتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَمَّا جَاءَنِيَ الْبَيِّنَاتُ مِنْ
رَبِّي وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ
نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ لِتَكُونُوا
شُيُوخًا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُتَوَفَّىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلِتَبْلُغُوا أَجَلًا مُسَمًّى وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ
﴿٦٧﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٦٨﴾

(66) Say, "I have been prohibited from worshipping those whom you worship besides Allāh since the clear signs have come to me from my Lord. I have also been commanded to be obedient to the Lord of the universe. (67) It is He Who created you from sand, then from a drop of fluid, then from a clot of blood, after which Allāh extracted you as a child. Thereafter, (Allāh preserves you) to reach your strength, and then to become old, the lives of some of you being taken first. And (He preserves you) so that you reach the appointed term, and so that you may understand. (68) It is Allāh Who gives life and death. When He decrees a matter all He has to say is "Be.' and it is.

I CANNOT WORSHIP YOUR GODS BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN COMMANDED TO OBEY THE LORD OF THE UNIVERSE

Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"Say (to the Polytheists), I have been prohibited from worshipping those whom you worship besides Allāh since the clear signs have come to me from my Lord. I have also been commanded to be obedient to the Lord of the universe.'"* This declaration put an end to the aspirations of the polytheists, who entertained hopes that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would join their ranks or even compromise with them.

Allāh then describes the various stages of man's creation. Allāh says, *'It is He Who created you from sand..."* Allāh created the first man, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, from sand, which therefore becomes the base element in man's creation. Thereafter, Allāh caused Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and his progeny to reproduce *'from a drop of fluid"*. Thus, children are conceived when this *'fluid"* (sperm) fertilises the egg of a female, which gradually develops until it forms *"a clot of blood"*. This clot of blood develops further until it forms into a little lump of flesh. Allāh then creates bones and organs in this flesh, instils life in it *"after which Allāh extracted you as a child."* This discussion is given in the commentary of verse 5 of Surah Hajj (*Surah* 22).

THE STAGES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Allāh then proceeds to describe the progress of man's development after infancy and childhood. Allāh says, *"Thereafter, (Allāh preserves you) to reach your strength"* i.e. the stage when man's faculties of perception and the strength of his

limbs are toned and fully functional. However, this stage of youthful vibrancy also disappears, after which you *"become old."*

However, every human being does not pass through this cycle, because there are many people whose lives come to an end before they reach old age, while others die as children. This is referred to in the phrase *"the lives of some of you being taken first."* Allāh further says that He allows man to pass through these stages of development so that they may *"reach the appointed term"* i.e. Judgment day, when every person will have to answer for his/her deeds.

Another reason for leading man through these stages is so that he *"may understand"* i.e. So that he may reflect and understand the various reasons for and the wisdom behind the rungs in his ladder to the Hereafter.

"It is Allāh Who gives life and death." Allāh does as he pleases, with none to prevent Him. In fact, He is so Mighty that *"When He decrees a matter, all He has to say is 'Be!' and it is."* Allāh's mere intention to bring something into existence is sufficient. Mention has also been made of this in the commentary of verse 117 of Surah Baqarah.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي آيَاتِ اللَّهِ أَنَّىٰ يُصْرَفُونَ ﴿69﴾ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا
بِالْكِتَابِ وَبِمَا أَرْسَلْنَا بِهِ رُسُلَنَا ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿70﴾ إِذِ الْأَغْلَالُ فِي
أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلَاسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿71﴾ فِي الْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿72﴾ ثُمَّ
قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿73﴾ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالُوا ضَلُّوا عَنَّا بَلْ لَمْ نَكُنْ
نَدْعُو مِنْ قَبْلُ شَيْئًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿74﴾ ذَٰلِكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَمْرَحُونَ ﴿75﴾ ادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ
فَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿76﴾ فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۚ فَإِمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ
الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿77﴾

(69) Have you not seen those who dispute about Allāh's verses? Where are they heading? (70) Those who falsify the Book and that with which We sent Our messengers. They shall soon come to know... (71) ... When yokes will be placed around their necks, as well as chains. They will be dragged... (72) ... into the boiling water, after which they will be cast as fuel for the Fire. (73) Thereafter it will be told to them, "Where are those whom you ascribed as partners... (74) ...to Allāh?" They will reply, "They have been lost to us. In fact, we never worshipped anything before this." Thus does Allāh send the disbelievers astray. (75) This is because you were unjustifiably haughty on earth and because you were boastful. (76) Enter the gates of Hell where you will live forever. Evil indeed is the abode of the proud ones! (77) Be patient, for verily Allāh's promise is true. So if We show you some of what We have promised them, or if We have

to claim your soul, then only to Us shall they be returned.

THE INMATES OF HELL WILL BE DRAGGED IN CHAINS TO THE FIRE AND ASKED WHERE ARE THEIR GODS

The verses above refer to those people who dispute about Allāh's verses, and who falsify the divine scriptures and Allāh's messages to the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام. Allāh warns them when He says, *"They shall soon come to know* (about their punishment); *when yokes will be placed around their necks, as well as chains. They will be dragged into the boiling water, after which they will be cast as fuel for the Fire.*

Thereafter it will be told to them, 'Where are those whom you ascribed as partners to Allāh?' They will reply, 'They have been lost to us (we cannot expect any help from them). *In fact, we never worshipped anything before this."*

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has rendered the following two interpretations of this verse:

1. They meant, "We now realise that our gods were nothing."
2. They were lying, just as they are quoted as saying, *"By Allāh, our Lord, we never perpetrated polytheism!"* [*Surah An'ām (6), verse 23*]

After mentioning their reply, Allāh says, *"Thus does Allāh send the disbelievers astray."* Whereas they regarded their gods to be everything in this world, they will write them off as nothing in the Hereafter. Because of the hysteria they will suffer on the Day of Judgment, they will even be audacious enough to blatantly lie to Allāh.

They will then be told, *"This* (punishment) *is because you were unjustifiably haughty on earth and because you were boastful."* These people allowed their preoccupation with the world to make them heedless of the Hereafter, and cause them to forget that all bounties come from Allāh. They will also be told, *"Enter the gates of Hell where you will live forever. Evil indeed is the abode of the proud ones!"* When Allāh's messengers and their deputies preached to these people, they considered it an insult to heed their teachings because of their arrogance.

The above verse states, *"They will be dragged into the boiling water, after which they will be cast as fuel for the Fire."* However, Allāh says in Surah Dukhān reads, *"Grab him and drag him to the very midst of the Blazing Fire! Then pour the punishment of boiling water over his head."* This verse therefore conveys the message that the boiling water will be poured after the people have been entered into the fire of Hell. Therefore, certain people have pointed out the seeming discrepancy between the two verses. It should be noted that there is no inconsistency between the two verses. The verse of Surah Mumin does not specify that the boiling water will be at the very beginning (even before entering Hell itself). After entering Hell, some people will first experience the boiling water, while others will experience the torture of "the Blazing Fire" (which does not necessarily refer to the entire Hell, but can well be a part of it).

Thereafter, Allāh encourages the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be patient.

Allāh says, *"Be patient, for verily Allāh's promise is true. So if We show you some of what* (punishment) *We have promised them* (while you are alive), *or if We have to claim your soul* (before punishing them), *then only to Us shall they be returned* (in either case)." Therefore, they will receive their due punishment in the Hereafter, from which they have no escape.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُم مَّن قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُم مَّن لَّمْ نَقْصُصْ
عَلَيْكَ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَن يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قُضِيَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

(78) Verily We have sent many messengers before you. Of these there are those whose narratives We have related to you, as well as those whose narratives We have not related to you. No messenger has the power to produce a miracle without Allāh's permission. So when Allāh's command comes, judgement will be passed with the truth and, on that occasion, the people of falsehood will be at a loss.

THE NARRATIVES OF SOME PROPHETS عليهم السلام WERE RELATED TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم, WHILE OTHERS WERE NOT. NO MIRACLE CAN TAKE PLACE WITHOUT ALLĀH'S COMMAND

The above verse contains two messages. The first, addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, says, *"Verily We have sent many messengers before you. Of these there are those whose narratives we have related to you, as well as those whose narratives We have not related to you."* The narratives of many of these Prophets عليهم السلام have been given in Surah Baqarah, Surah Mā'idah, Surah An'ām, Surah A'rāf, Surah Hūd, Surah Anbiya, and many other Surahs. The fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمwas informed about the number of all the Prophet عليه السلام does not contradict this verse. The verse refers to the knowledge of the detailed incidents of these Prophets عليهم السلام, about which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمwas not informed.

The "Musnad" of Imām Ahmad رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه that he once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the number of Prophets عليهم السلام. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمreplied, "They were a hundred and twenty-four thousand (124,000), 315 of them being the messengers." [*"Mishkāt" p.* 151]

Since this hadith is not Mutawātir, it is not essential to one's belief to believe in this (or any other) specific number of the Prophets عليهم السلام.

The second message that this verse delivers is *"No messenger has the power to produce a miracle without Allāh's permission."* Every miracle that every one of the Prophet عليه السلام produced was possible only by Allāh's command. Whenever a nation requested a miracle from their the Prophet عليه السلام, he could do nothing to comply with their request unless Allāh willed. Only then would Allāh grant

the Prophets عليهم السلام the ability to perform the miracle that He wills. On many occasions, Allāh did not permit the miracle to take place, upon which people would deny the Prophet hood of the Prophets عليهم السلام. This happened to many Prophets عليهم السلام in the past, as well as to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This verse therefore encourages the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to exercise patience just as the Prophets عليهم السلام of the past did.

Allāh says further, *"So when Allāh's command comes, judgement will be passed with the truth and, on that occasion, the people of falsehood will be at a loss."* On the Day of Judgment, the believers will attain salvation, while the disbelievers and polytheists will be doomed to Hell.

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمَ لِتَرْكَبُوا۟ مِنْهَا وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا
مَنَٰفِعُ وَلِتَبْلُغُوا۟ عَلَيْهَا حَاجَةً فِى صُدُورِكُمْ وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى ٱلْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾
وَيُرِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ فَأَىَّ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ تُنكِرُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟
كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوٓا۟ أَكْثَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ قُوَّةً وَءَاثَارًا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ
فَرِحُوا۟ بِمَا عِندَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا۟
بَأْسَنَا قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥ وَكَفَرْنَا بِمَا كُنَّا بِهِۦ مُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾ فَلَمْ يَكُ
يَنفَعُهُمْ إِيمَٰنُهُمْ لَمَّا رَأَوْا۟ بَأْسَنَا ۖ سُنَّتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى قَدْ خَلَتْ فِى عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ
ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

(79) Allāh created the animals for you so that you may ride some of them, while you may eat others. (80) There are many benefits for you in them, and (Allāh has created them) so that you may attain the need in your hearts by riding them. You are transported on them and on ships. (81) And Allāh shows you His signs, so which of Allāh 's signs will you reject? (82) Do they not travel in the lands to see what was the plight of those before them? Those people were more than them in numbers, more powerful than them in strength and in terms of the landmarks they left behind on earth. However, everything they earned was of no avail to them. (83) When their messengers brought the clear signs to them, they became arrogant on account of the knowledge they had, and the punishment of their mockery enveloped them. (84) When they saw Our punishment, they said, "We believe in Allāh Alone and reject the partners we ascribed to Him. (85) However, their belief could not benefit them when they saw Our punishment. (This is) Allāh's practice, which has passed over His bondsmen. The disbelievers shall be at a loss.

THE BOUNTY OF ANIMALS AND SHIPS

Allāh reminds man of the many bounties that He has conferred upon them. Allāh says, *"Allāh created the animals for you so that you may ride some of them, while you may eat others."* Besides this, *"There are many (other) benefits for you in them."* Man derives milk, as well as leather and wool from their hides. Allāh adds, *"(Allāh has created them) so that you may attain the need in your hearts by riding them."* People use the animals as a means of transport for themselves, as well as for their goods, enabling them to conduct business without having to bear the burden themselves.

"You are transported on them and on ships." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes certain commentators as saying that this part of the verse refers to the transportation of women and children, because riding has already been mentioned. Whereas a man may venture to undertake a journey by himself, women and children have to be *"transported"* along.

"And Allāh shows you His signs, so which of Allāh's signs will you reject?" Allāh's signs are evident everywhere, and cannot be rejected by any person with a sound mind. Therefore, it will be sheer foolishness or obstinacy that will prevent a person from admitting oneness of Allāh.

THE DESTRUCTION OF FORMER NATIONS

Allāh says, *"Do they not travel in the lands to see (from the ruins of former civilizations) what was the plight of those before them? Those people were more than them in numbers, more powerful than them in strength and in terms of the landmarks they left behind on earth. However, everything they earned was of no avail to them. When their messengers brought the clear signs to them, they became arranging on account of the knowledge they had, and the punishment of their mockery enveloped them."* Eventually only the ruins of their settlements were left. It is necessary for those who recite the Qur'ān to reflect over these occurrences and to take a lesson from them.

Discussing the plight of the former nations further, Allāh says, *"When they saw Our punishment, they said, 'We believe in Allāh Alone and reject the partners we ascribed to Him.' However, their belief could not benefit them when they saw Our punishment. (This is) Allāh 's practice, which has passed over His bondsmen."* The principle has always stood that belief and repentance are not accepted when Allāh's punishment arrives. [The only exception was the nation of Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام, the details of which have been discussed in the commentary of verse 98 of Surah Yunus (*Surah 10*)].

"The disbelievers shall be at a loss." It is therefore imperative that future nations take heed and do not fall in the same trap as their predecessors. •

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

سورة حٰم السجدة

Makkan	Surah Hā Mīm Sajdah or Fussilat	Verses 54

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

حمٓ ﴿١﴾ تَنزِيلٌ مِّنَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ كِتَٰبٌ فُصِّلَتْ ءَايَٰتُهُۥ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّقَوْمٍ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣﴾ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا فَأَعْرَضَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ قُلُوبُنَا فِىٓ
أَكِنَّةٍ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَآ إِلَيْهِ وَفِىٓ ءَاذَانِنَا وَقْرٌ وَمِنۢ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنِكَ حِجَابٌ فَٱعْمَلْ إِنَّنَا
عَٰمِلُونَ ﴿٥﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) HāMīm. (2) A revelation from the Beneficent, the Most Merciful. (3) A Book, the verses of which have been clearly expounded as an Arabic Qur'ān, for a nation with knowledge. (4) It is a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. However, most of them turn away and do not listen. (5) They say, "Our hearts are veiled from what you call us towards, and there are props in our ears. There is also a barrier between you and us, so do (as you please), we shall do (as we please)."

THE VERSES OF THE QUR'ĀN ARE CLEAR, AND IT IS A BEARER OF GLAD TIDINGS, AS WELL AS A WARNER

The Surah begins with the words *"HāMīm"* which is from the Hurūf Muqatta'āt. As mentioned before, only Allāh has knowledge of the meaning of these words. Allāh then proceeds to describe the attributes of the Qur'ān. Allāh says that it is *"A revelation from the Beneficent, the Most Merciful."* Because of His infinite mercy, Allāh revealed the Qur'ān for the guidance of mankind.

Thereafter, Allāh says that the Qur'ān is *"A Book, the verses of which have been clearly expounded..." Since* the Qur'ān primarily addressed the Arabs, it was revealed as *"an Arabic Qur'ān.* The Arabs during the period of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were fluent and eloquent in the language, possessing a deep understanding of Arabic rhetoric. Therefore, the Qur'ān is extremely eloquent in its manner of address, far surpassing the speech of any man. For this reason, the Arabs had no choice but to concede to its miraculous and divine nature. The Qur'ān proclaims the truth to everyone, and it is necessary for everyone to

believe in it. However, it is only those with intelligence and sound knowledge who will take heed. Therefore, Allāh says, that it was revealed *'for a nation with knowledge."*

Allāh then mentions the fourth quality of the Qur'ān when He says, *"It is a bearer of glad tidings and a warner.* "Despite the Qur'ān being as great as it is, there will always be those who are averse to the truth. Allāh says, *"However, most of them turned away and do not listen."* Not only are they obstinate, but they were even audacious enough to tell the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Our hearts are veiled from what you call us towards, and there are props in our ears* (because we do not want to listen to you). *There is also a barrier between you and us* (even though we are close physically), *so do* (as you please), *we shall do* (as we please)." i.e. You go about your religion, while we shall practise our own. Thus saying, they made it clear that they were not interested in listening to the truth, nor accepting it.

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ فَٱسْتَقِيمُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوهُ ۗ وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٦﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٧﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٨﴾

(6) Say, "I am but a human like you. Revelation has been sent to me that your Deity is only One. So remain devoted to Him, and seek forgiveness from Him. Destruction be to the polytheists..." (7) "...who do not pay Zakāh and who disbelieve in the Hereafter." (8) "There shall certainly be an everlasting reward for those who believe and do righteous deeds."

PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS INSTRUCTED TO ANNOUNCE THAT HE IS HUMAN LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, EXCEPT THAT HE RECEIVES REVELATION

In response to the objection of the Polytheists that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could not be a Prophet because he was human, Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"Say, 'I am but a human like you. (However, the difference between us is that) Revelation has been sent to me that your Deity is only One.* " A sound intellect will understand that Allāh is the Only Creator and Deity. This will then prompt one to obey all Allāh's commands, refrain from all forms of deviation, *"remain devoted to Him, and seek forgiveness from Him."* One should never lose hope of Allāh's mercy, and one can even secure forgiveness for disbelief and polytheism. When a person repents and accepts Islām, all his past sins are completely forgiven.

Allāh then speaks about the terrible fate of the polytheists when He says, *"Destruction be to the polytheists, who do not pay Zakāh and who disbelieve in the Hereafter."* How will they be particular about their daily Salāh when they cannot even spend annually from their wealth? They have certainly been overcome with miserliness. Certain commentators do not interpret the word *'Zakāh"* as it is normally understood. Rather, they use the literal meaning of the word *'Zakāh ",*

which refers to cleansing and purifying. Therefore, they maintain that the polytheists are doomed because they do not cleanse themselves of the impurity of polytheism.

Thereafter, Allāh describes the condition of the believers. Allāh says, *"There shall certainly be an everlasting reward for those who believe and do righteous deeds."*

قُلْ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ أَندَادًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩﴾ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ مِن فَوْقِهَا وَبَارَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَا أَقْوَاتَهَا فِي أَرْبَعَةِ أَيَّامٍ سَوَاءً لِّلسَّائِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَرْضِ ائْتِيَا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا قَالَتَا أَتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ ﴿١١﴾ فَقَضَاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَأَوْحَىٰ فِي كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ أَمْرَهَا ۚ وَزَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ وَحِفْظًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴿١٢﴾

(9) Say, "Do you people really disbelieve in, and ascribe partners to the Being Who created the earth in two days? He is the Lord of the universe." (10) And Allāh has placed mountains on the surface of the earth, blessed the earth, and stipulated the earth 's provisions in four complete days; for those who question. (11) Thereafter, Allāh turned to the sky, which was smoke, and said to it, as well as to the earth, "Come to Us willingly or unwillingly." Both replied, "We shall come willingly." (12) Within two days, Allāh then made them into seven skies, and issued a suitable command to each sky. Allāh decorated the sky of the world with lanterns and made them a means of protection. This is the decree of the Mighty, the Wise.

ALLĀH ADDRESSES THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

Allāh admonishes the Polytheists, *"Say, 'Do you people really disbelieve in, and ascribe partners to the Being Who created the earth in two days?"* It is sufficient for a person with sound intellect to understand that he should believe in oneness of Allāh after realising that Allāh is the Being Who created him. However, instead of believing, the polytheists ascribe partners to Allāh, regarding these partners to be equal to Allāh. These partners cannot create anything, but were themselves created. The Being Who created us and them *"is the Lord of the universe."*

Not only did Allāh create the magnificent earth, He also created everything on the earth. Citing some of these, Allāh says, *"And Allāh has placed mountains on the surface of the earth, blessed the earth..."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that Allāh blessed the earth by creating various forms of fauna and flora. In addition to this, Allāh *"stipulated the earth's provisions in four complete days..."* Allāh has predetermined exactly how much food of a certain type will grow in precisely which place and time.

"....... in four complete days..." This means that Allāh created the earth in two days, after which He created the mountains and the other terrestrial phenomena in another two days, together with stipulating the various provisions. Commentators have opted for this interpretation because many other verses mention that Allāh created the heavens, the earth and everything between in six days. The other two days were used to create the heavens.

Allāh adds, *"...... for those who question."* Hākim رحمة الله عليه and Bayhaqi رحمة الله عليه report from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that when the Jews questioned the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the creation of the heavens and the earth, he replied to their query. Allāh then revealed the above verses, concluding with the words *"...in four complete days for those who question."* [*"Durrul Manthūr"*]

Thereafter, Allāh discusses the creation of the skies. Allāh states, *"Thereafter, Allāh turned to the sky, (the basic nature of) which was smoke, and said to it, as well as to the earth, 'Come to Us willingly or unwillingly'"* i.e. willingly or unwillingly submit to the laws that apply to you. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that they were not actually given a choice in the matter, but were commanded to comply in any event. *"Both (the heavens and the earth) replied, 'We shall come willingly.'"*

"Within two days, Allāh then made them into seven skies, and issued a suitable command to each sky." i.e. Commands were issued to the angels of every sky.

Furthermore, *"Allāh decorated the sky of the world with lanterns and made them a means of protection. This is the decree of the Mighty, the Wise."* The stars are used to pelt those Satan's who try to eavesdrop on the discussions taking place among the angels.

Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"It is He Who created for you whatever is on earth. Thereafter he turned His attention to the sky and perfected it as seven skies."* Allāh also says in Surah Nāzi'āt, *"Allāh raised the roof of the sky and perfected it. He made the night dark and exposed its day. Thereafter, He spread out the earth."* [*Surah 79, verses 28-30*]

The above verses teach us that Allāh first created the basic structure of the earth and thereafter placed the weighty mountains upon it. Thereafter, Allāh created the seven skies, which were in the form of smoke. It was only then that Allāh spread the earth out as we see it. Therefore, these verses of Surah Baqarah and Surah Nāzi'āt, as well as the above verses of Surah HāMīm Sajdah will not contradict each other.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم RECITES THE VERSE IN RESPONSE TO THE OBSTINACY OF THE QURAYSH

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes (*v.15 p.338*) that the Quraysh once spoke among themselves saying, "The affair of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم has become extremely contentious. We should send to him a person who is well versed in poetry, fortune-telling and magic. He should enter into a discussion with Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and inform us about the reality of Muhammad's صلى الله عليه وسلم message." Thereupon, Utba bin Rabī'ah stood up saying, "I swear by

Allāh! I am well-versed in poetry, fortune-telling, as well as magic. I shall certainly be able to tell you whether Muhammad's صلى الله عليه وسلم message is from any of the three i.e. poetry, fortune-telling or magic." Consequently, he was sent to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

When Utba reached the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he said, "O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! Are you better than Qusayy bin Kilāb? Are you better than Hishām? Are you better than Abdul Muttalib? Are you better than Abdullāh? (These were all the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم forefathers). You speak ill of our gods, regard our forefathers as deviated and foolish, and you deride our religion. (What do you wish to achieve?) If you desire to be a leader, we will make you our leader and even raise flags to announce your leadership as long as you live. If you desire to marry, we will marry you to ten of our finest Quraysh women. If you desire wealth, we will amass so much wealth for you, which will make you and your progeny independent of everyone. If it is the ill effect of a Jinn causing you to say what you do, we will raise enough money to ensure that you are cured."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم listened silently to what Utba had to say. When Utba was over, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم calmly said, "O Abu Walīd! Have you had your say?" "Yes," replied Utba. Thereupon, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him to listen. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited *"Bismillahir Rahmānir Rahīm"* followed by the verses of Surah HāMīm Sajdah. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reached the words, *"If they turn away, then say, I warn you of a punishment like the punishment of the Ād and Thamud"'* [verse 13], Utba sprung up and placed his hand over the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم blessed mouth, pleading with him in Allāh's name to stop reciting.

Thereafter, Utba returned home and avoided the gatherings of the Quraysh. Abu Jahl said to him, *"Have you lost your religion and moulded yourself in the cast of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم? Or do you just like his food?"* Upon hearing this, Utba flew into a towering rage and said, "By Allāh! I shall never again speak to Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! By Allāh! You know that I am the wealthiest person of the Quraysh (therefore, I have not maintained my silence because I need the food of any other person). When I spoke to Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, he gave me a reply that was neither poetry, nor soothe-saying, nor magic. Thereafter, Utba recited the verses of Surah HāMīm Sajdah up to the words, *"Say, I warn you of a punishment like the punishment of the Ād and Thamud."* Utba continued, *"I then placed my hand on his mouth and begged him not to recite further. You know well that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم has never spoken a lie. I therefore stopped him for fear that punishment will afflict you people."*

According to another narration, Utba listened attentively as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited for him until the Sajdah verse *(Prostration is compulsory when the recitor recite a verse)*. Thereafter, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him, "O Abu Walīd! You have heard what I said. Now you decide (whether to believe or suffer Allāh's punishment)." Utba then left.

As Utba approached the gathering of the Quraysh, they noticed a marked change in him. They said, "By Allāh! Abu Walīd has changed. He has returned with another face." When he arrived in their midst, they asked him what had

happened. He said, "By Allāh! I have heard such speech from Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, which I have never heard before. I swear by Allāh that it is neither poetry, nor soothe-saying. Therefore, listen to what I have to say about this affair. Leave Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to be and do not say anything to him. His teachings will certainly gain popularity. If the other Arabs assassinate him, your work will be done for you. However, if Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم becomes a king, or his Prophet hood is exposed, you people will share the fortune with him, because his kingdom will be yours, and his honour will also be yours."

Hearing this, the other members of the Quraysh said, "O Abu Walīd! It seems like Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم has charmed you with a magic spell." Utba replied, "This is my opinion. You decide further."

فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَقُلْ أَنذَرْتُكُمْ صَـٰعِقَةً مِّثْلَ صَـٰعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَثَمُودَ ﴿١٣﴾ إِذْ جَآءَتْهُمُ ٱلرُّسُلُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۖ قَالُوا لَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّنَا لَأَنزَلَ مَلَـٰٓئِكَةً فَإِنَّا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِۦ كَـٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً ۖ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً ۖ وَكَانُوا بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِىٓ أَيَّامٍ نَّحِسَاتٍ لِّنُذِيقَهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْخِزْىِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ أَخْزَىٰ ۖ وَهُمْ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَـٰهُمْ فَٱسْتَحَبُّوا ٱلْعَمَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ فَأَخَذَتْهُمْ صَـٰعِقَةُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْهُونِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَنَجَّيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

(13) If they turn away, then say, "I warn you of a punishment like the punishment of the Ād and Thamud." (14) When their messengers came to them from the front of them and from behind them (saying), "Worship Allāh Only", they replied, "If our Lord wanted (to send a messenger), he would have sent angels. We therefore disbelieve in what you have been sent with." (15) As for the Ād, they were arrogant on earth without reason, and said, "Who can be more powerful than us? "Do they not see that Allāh Who has created them is more powerful than them? They also rejected Our signs. (16) So We sent a fierce windstorm against them during the ominous days, to make them taste a humiliating punishment in this worldly life. The punishment of the Hereafter is even more humiliating, and they will never be assisted. (17) As for the Thamūd, We guided them, but they chose blindness instead of guidance. So, because of what they earned, a catastrophic punishment seized them, which was extremely humiliating. (18) We rescued those who believed and feared.

THOSE WHO DENY THE TRUTH ARE WARNED ABOUT RECEIVING PUNISHMENT LIKE THE ĀD AND THAMUD

In these verses, Allāh admonishes people for failing to believe, despite witnessing His many signs. Allāh tells them that there were many nations before them who also refused to believe, as a result of which they were destroyed when Allāh's punishment seized them.

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"If they turn away, then say, 'I warn you of a punishment like the punishment of the Ād and Thamūd. When their messengers came to them from the front of them and from behind them* (saying), *'Worship Allāh Only', they replied, 'If our Lord wanted* (to send a messenger), *he would have sent angels. We therefore disbelieve in what you have been sent with.'"* These disbelievers said this because they could neither find fault with the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام, nor with the character of the Prophets عليهم السلام themselves. They therefore argued that if Allāh really wanted to send a Prophet, He would not have sent a man who is just like them.

After making simultaneous mention of the two nations, Allāh proceeds to mention them individually. Allāh first speaks of the nation of Ād, who were an extremely powerful nation, possessing tremendous physical strength. Allāh says, *"As for the Ād, they were arrogant on earth without reason, and said, 'Who can be more powerful than us?'"* When man is bestowed with wealth, strength and children, he becomes arrogant and boastful. In this foolish stupor, he thinks that none can ever compare to him. He then forgets that his Creator is Greater than him. Therefore, Allāh replied to the audacious claim of the Ād by saying, *"Do they not see that Allāh Who has created them is more powerful than them?"*

Allāh talks about them further when He says, *"They also rejected Our signs."* Despite witnessing all the signs that attest to Allāh's Oneness and Greatness, they chose to remain obstinate. As a result of this, Allāh *"sent a fierce windstorm against them during the ominous days, to make them taste a humiliating punishment in this worldly life. The punishment of the Hereafter is even more humiliating, and they will never be assisted."*

Their strength, wealth and pride will be of no avail to them when they suffer Allāh's punishment. Allāh says in Surah Hāqqa, *"As for the Ād, they were destroyed by an icy tempest. Allāh unleashed it upon them for seven consecutive nights and eight consecutive days. You would have seen them lying flat on the ground as if they were hollow palm trunks."* A similar reference is made to them in Surah Qamar where Allāh says, *"The Ād denied, so how was My punishment and warnings? Verily We sent against them a cyclonic wind during days of perpetual misfortune. It ousted people as if they were uprooted palm trunks."*

The Ahadīth state that nothing can be truly ominous (i.e. augur ill for a person). Sayyidina Sa'd bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If there was anything like an ill omen, it would have been in three things, a house, a horse, or a woman." [*"Mishkāt" p. 392, from Abu Dawūd*]

Therefore, when the Qur'ān mentions *"during the ominous days'* it will mean that the days were ill-fated specifically for the Ād. It will not mean that specific days are ominous, because this will then mean that all days of the week are ill

fated, since the windstorm blew for eight consecutive days.

Allāh then discusses the plight of the Thamud. Allāh says, *"As for the Thamūd, We guided them..."* i.e. We sent Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام to them, who showed them the truth and taught them about oneness of Allāh. However, *"they chose blindness instead of guidance. So, because of what they earned, a catastrophic punishment seized them, which was extremely humiliating."* The Arabic word "Sā'iqah" actually refers to a bolt of lightning, but it may also be used to denote a catastrophe (as translated above). Allāh concludes the epic by emphasising, *"We rescued those who believed and feared (Allāh)."*

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ (19) حَتَّىٰ إِذَا مَا جَاءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (20) وَقَالُوا لِجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدتُّمْ عَلَيْنَا قَالُوا أَنطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (21) وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَسْتَتِرُونَ أَن يَشْهَدَ عَلَيْكُمْ سَمْعُكُمْ وَلَا أَبْصَارُكُمْ وَلَا جُلُودُكُمْ وَلَٰكِن ظَنَنتُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَعْلَمُ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ (22) وَذَٰلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ الَّذِي ظَنَنتُم بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَاكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ (23) فَإِن يَصْبِرُوا فَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ وَإِن يَسْتَعْتِبُوا فَمَا هُم مِّنَ الْمُعْتَبِينَ (24) ۞ وَقَيَّضْنَا لَهُمْ قُرَنَاءَ فَزَيَّنُوا لَهُم مَّا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا خَاسِرِينَ (25)

(19) The day when Allāh's enemies will be ushered towards the Fire and restrained. (20) Until, when they arrive there, their ears, eyes and skins will testify about what they did. (21) They will say to their skins, "Why do you testify against us?" They will reply, "Allāh, Who gives speech to everything, has enabled us to speak. It was He Who created you the first time, and to Him is your return." (22) You did not hide (your actions thinking) that your ears, eyes and skins will testify against you, but you thought that Allāh is unaware of most of the things you do. (23) That was the perception that you held about your Lord. It has destroyed you and made you among the losers. (24) Even if they exercise patience, the Fire shall be their abode. And if they try to please Allāh, they will never be allowed to do so. (25) We have delegated companions for them, who beautify for them whatever is before them and behind them. The decree shall be passed against them, together with all the groups of man and Jinn that have passed before them. Verily, they are all losers.

ALLĀH'S ENEMIES WILL BE TAKEN TO HELL, WHERE THEIR LIMBS WILL TESTIFY AGAINST THEM

Allāh speaks of the terrible plight that His enemies the disbelievers will

suffer on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says, *"The day* (of Judgment) *when Allāh's enemies will be ushered towards the Fire and restrained (because of their large numbers. This will continue) "Until, when they will arrive there, their ears, eyes and skins will testify about what they did."* All the limbs will disclose exactly what sin they used to perpetrate. Even the skin, which covers the entire body, will be a witness to every sin. Surah Nūr and Surah Yāsīn mention that the hands and legs will testify against people.

Astonished that their very own bodies are giving testimony against them, people will exclaim, *"Why do you testify against us?"* i.e. By testifying against us, you are also condemning yourselves to punishment, because you are part of us. We denied our sins so that you will be saved from punishment, but you have now revealed the truth. We cannot understand why you should do this. The limbs will reply, *"Allāh, Who gives speech to everything, has enabled us to speak."* i.e.

Allāh gave us the ability to speak and commanded us to do so. How could we refuse? You should not be surprised at our ability to speak because Allāh can grant this faculty to whoever He pleases.

Muslim reports from Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه that once, while they were with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he laughed quietly. Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمasked the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم, "Do you know why I laughed?" 'Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم know best," replied the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم. Thereupon, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I laughed at what a slave will say to his Lord (on the Day of Judgment). The slave will say, 'O my Lord! Did You not promise me that You shall never oppress me?' 'I did promise you this,' will be the reply.

Thereupon, the man will say, 'I will therefore not accept any witness against me, except those that are a part of me.' Allāh will say to him, 'Today, your own self will suffice as a witness against you. The 'Kirāman Kātibīn' (the recording angels) shall also suffice as witnesses against you.' His lips will then be sealed, and it will be said to his limbs, 'Speak!' Consequently, all his limbs will testify regarding the deeds he perpetrated. When he will be allowed to speak again, he will address his limbs saying, 'May you be destroyed! It was for your sake that I was disputing.''' [*"Mishkāt" p. 485*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that, on the Day of Judgment, a hypocrite will say, "O my Lord! I believed in You, Your scripture and Your Holy Prophet. I performed Salāh, fasted, and spent in Sadaqah *(Charity)*." In this manner, he will continue to praise himself as much as possible. Thereupon, Allāh will say, *"We shall soon find out when the witnesses are presented."* The person will be puzzled about who the witnesses could be. His lips will then be sealed, and his thighs, flesh, and bones will be told to speak. All these will then testify to his deeds. This will take place so that none can raise an objection against Allāh. The above will happen to the hypocrite *(Munafiq)* since Allāh will be displeased with him. [*Muslim, p. 409*]

While verse 65 of Surah Yāsīn (*Surah 36*) and the above hadith state that the mouth will be sealed, verse 24 of Surah Nūr (*Surah 24*) mentions that even the tongues of the sinful will testify against them. The reply to this seeming discrepancy is that the different verses refer to different stages of the Judgment

day. There will be times when the tongues will be unable to move, while on other occasions Allāh will permit the tongues to speak.

"It was He Who created you the first time, and to Him is your return." Allāh is All Powerful, and can easily make other limbs speak on the Day of Judgment, just as He makes the tongue speak in this world.

Allāh will then address the disbelievers saying, *"You did not hide (your actions thinking) that your ears, eyes and skins will testify against you, but you thought that Allāh is unaware of most of the things you do."* In this world, the disbelievers do not think that their limbs will testify against them, and therefore think that committing sins secretly will be unnoticed. Little do they realise that they cannot hide from their own limbs. Worse still is the fact that they actually hold the same opinion about Allāh, thinking Allāh is also unaware of what they do. The fact that they sin proves that they regard Allāh as one of the creation, who has no knowledge of their secret deeds. This is why they sinned secretly and not because their were afraid of the testimony of their limbs (because they had no idea that their limbs could ever testify).

Bukhari reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه that he was once behind the drapes of the Ka'ba, when two persons of the Quraysh accompanied by someone from the Bani Thaqīf tribe arrived there. He says that they were fat men with little intelligence. He could not hear their conversation clearly, but heard one of them asking, "Can Allāh hear what you say?" The second person replied, "He can hear if you talk loudly, but not if you talk silently." Thereupon, the third person said, "If Allāh hears, He can hear everything." When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه reported the incident to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, Allāh revealed the verses, *"You did not hide (your actions ... and made you among the losers."* The verse therefore means that Allāh hears everything. In addition to Allāh's knowledge being a testimony against us, our limbs will also testify against us on the Day of Judgment about the sins we commit. Therefore we need to live a life of belief and good deeds.

THE EVIL PERCEPTION OF THE DISBELIEVERS WILL DESTROY THEM

Allāh continues, *"That was the perception that you held about your Lord (that He is unaware of most of your actions). It has destroyed you and made you among the losers."* If they had the conviction that Allāh is Aware of everything they do, they would have never sinned in public or in secret. However, this misconception led them to sin profusely and to abuse the limbs Allāh gave them as a favour. As a result, they will be eventually destroyed by Allāh's punishment.

"Even if they exercise patience, the Fire shall be their abode." When entered into Hell, it will not help them if they exercise patience or not. In either event, they will be doomed. Unlike this world, where a person's adversity will eventually be alleviated once he endures it patiently, the difficulties of the Hereafter will be perpetual, irrespective of one's patience.

Allāh adds, *"And if they try to please Allāh, they will never be allowed to do so."* They will be saved from Hell only if they had believed in this world, carried out

good deeds, and abstained from sin. Nothing else will benefit in the Hereafter.

EVIL COMPANIONS ARE DELEGATED FOR THE DISBELIEVERS

"We have delegated companions for them, who beautify for them whatever is before them and behind them." These companions persuade them that sins are good, and incite them to pursue the bidding of their passions. They also indoctrinate them with the belief that they need not worry about consequences because there shall be no life after death, and no Heaven or Hell. Being lured into this trap of deceit, the disbelievers fall deeper into disbelief and polytheism, thereby earning their stay in hell.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentions that *"whatever is before them"* refers to the Hereafter, i.e. their evil companions make the disbelievers believe that nothing exists in the Hereafter. He interprets *"and* (whatever is) *behind them"* as this world, meaning that they decorate the things of this world to be attractive and seductive. It therefore becomes easy to tempt man to indulge in these.

Allāh says in Surah Shura, "We shall appoint a Satan to every person who turns a blind eye to Rahmān's, who will be his companion. Indeed, they will forbid people from the path, while the people think that they are rightly guided. Until, when the time arrives that they come to Us, they say, 'O Dear! If only there was the distance of the East and West between yourself and Me! A terrible companion you were indeed!'" [*Surah 42, verses 36-38*]

Allāh continues, *"The decree (of punishment) shall be passed against them, together with all the groups of man and Jinn that have passed before them. Verily, they are all losers."* In this world, they had lives, wealth and their physical limbs. However, all these will be lost to them when they face Allāh's punishment in Hell.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَا تَسْمَعُوا۟ لِهَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَٱلْغَوْا۟ فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَغْلِبُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَلَنُذِيقَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَسْوَأَ ٱلَّذِى كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ أَعْدَآءِ ٱللَّهِ
ٱلنَّارُ ۖ لَهُمْ فِيهَا دَارُ ٱلْخُلْدِ ۖ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ
أَرِنَا ٱلَّذَيْنِ أَضَلَّانَا مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ نَجْعَلْهُمَا تَحْتَ أَقْدَامِنَا لِيَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلْأَسْفَلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾
إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا۟
وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِى
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِىٓ أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا
تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

(26) The disbelievers say, "Do not listen to this Qur'ān, and make a noise (to disturb its recitation) so that you may be victorious." (27) So We shall definitely let the disbelievers taste a severe punishment, and We shall certainly punish them for the worst of their deeds. (28) This Fire shall be the punishment for Allāh's enemies. They shall have an eternal abode there as punishment for rejecting Our signs. (29) The disbelievers will say, "O our Lord! Show us the two groups from the Jinn and humankind who misled us. We want to trample them beneath our feet so that both groups become of those who are most humiliated." (30) Verily those who say, "Our Lord is Allāh" and are then steadfast, angels shall surely descend to them (saying), "Neither have any fear, nor grief, and rejoice about the Heaven that you have been promised." (31) "We are your friends in the life of this world, as well as in the Hereafter. There you shall have whatever your heart desires, and you shall have whatever you ask for." (32) "This is the hospitality from the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."

THE DISBELIEVERS CONNIVE TO MAKE A NOISE TO INTERFERE WITH THE RECITATION OF THE QUR'ĀN

The first four verses discuss the connivance of the disbelievers, the punishment they are doomed to suffer, as well as the enmity they will display for each other on the Day of Judgment. The leaders of the polytheists in Makkah used to instruct their subordinates not to listen to the recitation of the Qur'ān, and to create a disturbance when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recites the Qur'ān. By talking loudly and discussing futile affairs, others would also be prevented from listening to the Qur'ān. Consequently, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite the Qur'ān, these wretches used to whistle, clap hands and recite poetry at the top of their voices.

Referring to these Mushrikīn *(polytheists)*, Allāh says, *"So We shall definitely let the disbelievers taste a severe punishment, and We shall certainly punish them for the worst of their deeds."* Since this verse does not specify whether this punishment will be in the world or in the Hereafter, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that both may be referred to, or either the one or the other. He then quotes Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه as saying that *"a severe punishment"* refers to the Battle of Badr, while *"punish them for the worst of their deeds"* refers to the punishment of the Hereafter. Therefore, they will be punished in both worlds.

Allāh then says, *"This Fire shall be the punishment for Allāh 's enemies. They shall have an eternal abode there as a punishment for rejecting Our signs."* They will not be fortunate enough to be released from Hell after a brief or long stay. Their suffering will be eternal.

THE MISGUIDED ONES WILL REQUEST TO TRAMPLE THEIR SENIORS BENEATH THEIR FEET

In this world, people remained as disbelievers upon the bidding of their leaders and seniors. Among those who led people astray were humans, as well as the Jinn. When these people persuaded their juniors to make noise while the Qur'ān was being recited, they gladly complied. However, on the Day of Judgment, their relationship will be greatly strained. The subordinates will cry for revenge and supplicate, *"O our Lord! Show us the two groups from the Jinn and*

humankind who misled us. We want to trample them beneath our feet so that both groups become of those who are most humiliated." Of course, it will be too late then, and they will all have to suffer the punishment they deserve.

GLAD TIDINGS FOR THE STEADFAST

"Verily those who say, 'Our Lord is Allāh' and are then steadfast (upon belief and Islām by fulfilling all the injunctions), angels shall surely descend to them (saying), Neither have any fear, nor grief and rejoice about the Heaven that you have been promised (by the Prophets عليهم السلام *and the divine scriptures)."*

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Zaid bin Aslam رحمة الله عليه that the angels will address these people in this manner at the time of their death. Thereafter, they will again convey these glad tidings when the people rise from their graves on the Day of Judgment. Other commentators are of the opinion that these tidings are not restricted to these occasions, but they are conveyed to the pious believers on several occasions during their lives in the form of reassurances. In this manner, the pious are further encouraged to carry out good deeds.

Sayyidina Atā bin Abi Rabāh رحمة الله عليه says that *"Neither have any fear"* means that they should not fear that their actions have been rejected. Furthermore, *"nor grief"* means that they should not grieve over their past sins, because these have been forgiven.

THE ANGELS ADDRESS THE PEOPLE OF BELIEF

The angels also tell the believers, *"We are your friends in the life of this world, as well as in the Hereafter."* The angels inspire the righteous to carry out good deeds, and assist them when necessary. The angels will therefore comfort the pious at the time of their death, by assuring them of their friendship in the Hereafter as well, when the angels will intercede on their behalf and greet them with the words, *"Peace be upon you for the patience that you exercised. How blissful is the outcome of the Hereafter!"* [*Surah Ra'd (13), verse 24*]

The welcoming angels will also briefly state the bounties of Heaven in the following words, *"There you shall have whatever your heart desires, and you shall have whatever you ask for."* Nothing that a person desires or asks will be denied.

"This is the hospitality from the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful." In Heaven, people will be the guests of Allāh, the Greatest. Therefore, the hospitality will be such that it is befitting of the rank of Allāh. As a result, every person will be given whatever he desires.

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّن دَعَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾
وَلَا تَسْتَوِى ٱلْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا ٱلسَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ٱدْفَعْ بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِى بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُۥ
عَدَٰوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُۥ وَلِىٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَمَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ وَمَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ
عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَإِمَّا يَنزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَٱسْتَعِذْ بِٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ

(33) Whose speech can be better than the one who calls towards Allāh, performs righteous deeds, and says, "I am from the Muslims." (34) Good and evil cannot be equal. Resist with that which is best, and the one between yourself and whom there was enmity will instantly become like your bosom friend. (35) Only the patient ones will be inspired with this. Only the most fortunate will be inspired with this. (36) If any whisper from Satan has to reach you, then seek refuge with Allāh. Undoubtedly, He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing.

THE EXCELLENCE OF A PERSON WHO CALLS TOWARDS ALLĀH, ENCOURAGEMENT TO ADOPT GOOD CHARACTER, AND SEEKING ALLĀH'S REFUGE FROM SATAN

Allāh says, *"Whose speech can be better than the one who calls towards Allāh, performs righteous deeds, and says, 'I am from the Muslims."* This verse emphasises that the person who invites others towards oneness of Allāh and Islām should himself practise what he preaches. By doing so, his preaching will have greater effect on others.

The verse also highlights the fact that the caller to Allāh should be humble. He should not laude his own praises, but should proclaim that he is just like everyone else, i.e. an ordinary Muslim. He must never allow his knowledge and his noble effort to be a cause of pride and ostentation.

Of course, when a person preaches Islām, he will encounter all types of people. There will be many who will oppose him and behave in a harsh manner towards him. Although it will be permissible to reply to their behaviour by adopting a similar attitude like theirs, good character demands that a person calmly endures their harshness. It will therefore be best for him to be tolerant and gentle. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"Good and evil cannot be equal. Resist (the malice of your opponents) with that (manner of approach) which is best, and (by adopting this approach,) the one between yourself and whom there was enmity, will instantly become like your bosom friend."*

Allāh then adds that this extremely noble quality of tolerance and good character is very rare, and will not be the lot of every person. Allāh says, *"Only the patient ones will be inspired with this. Only the most fortunate will be inspired with this."* Some commentators have interpreted *"the most fortunate"* to mean those who will earn the most rewards. Others say that it refers to those who are destined to enter Heaven. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

When a person engages in the noble task of propagating Allāh's religion *(Dīn)*, Satan will always attempt to whisper evil thoughts and suggestions into his mind. Hence, Allāh advises, *"If any whisper from Satan has to reach you, then seek refuge with Allāh. Undoubtedly, He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has written that the literal meaning of the Arabic word "nazgh" (translated above as *"whisper")* is 'to poke or prod someone with a stick or with the finger'. This denotes that Satan's whispers are very subtle, but can also be forceful. When a preacher tolerates the difficulties that people give him,

Satan immediately whispers into his heart saying, "You are preaching the truth, so why should you lower yourself before these ill-mannered people (i.e. leave them alone because they are not worthy of your noble effort)?" On this occasion, the
person should seek Allāh's refuge by reciting *"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytānir Rajīm"* ("I seek refuge with Allāh from the accursed Satan").

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِ ٱلَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ وَٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ ۚ لَا تَسْجُدُوا۟ لِلشَّمْسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ وَٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَهُنَّ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ فَإِنِ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فَٱلَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ يُسَبِّحُونَ لَهُۥ بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔمُونَ ۩ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنَّكَ تَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ خَٰشِعَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَآءَ ٱهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحْيَاهَا لَمُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

(37) From among Allāh's signs is the night, the day, the sun, and the moon. If you worship Allāh only, then do not prostrate to the sun, nor to the moon, but prostrate to Allāh, Who has created them. (38) If they are arrogant, then those who are close to your Lord glorify Him day and night without tiring. (39) Also from His signs is that you see the earth bare. Then, when We send rain upon it, it begins to stir and flourish. Verily, the One Who gave life to it is the One Who gives life to the dead. Indeed, He has power over all things.

THE DAY, THE NIGHT, THE SUN, AND THE MOON ARE ALL ALLĀH'S SIGNS, SO PROSTRATE ONLY TO HIM

In these verses, Allāh discusses various proofs of oneness of Allāh. Allāh says, *"From among Allāh 's signs is the night, the day, the sun, and the moon."* The great power of Allāh is displayed in the fact that He alternates the night and the day. Allāh created the sun and the moon, he gave light to the sun, and it is Only He who has fixed their orbits. These factors prove that only Allāh is worthy of being worshipped. Therefore, Allāh says, *"If you worship Allāh only, then do not prostrate to the sun, nor to the moon, but prostrate to Allāh, Who has created them."*

This verse emphasises that if people claim to worship Allāh, they should worship Him only without making any other being a partner in Allāh's worship. Therefore, if a person perpetrates polytheism, he cannot make the claim that he worships Allāh.

"If they are (too) arrogant (to take heed), then (their attitude will not harm Allāh in the least because) those (angels) who are close to your Lord glorify Him day and night without tiring." Allāh is not in need of man's worship because He is Great without it as well. There are also innumerable angels perpetually engaged in Allāh's worship and glorification (Of course, Allāh is not in need of their worship either).

THE REVIVAL OF BARREN GROUND IS ALSO ONE OF ALLĀH'S SIGNS

After speaking about the celestial bodies, Allāh points out that many signs of His Oneness and power are also to be found on earth. Allāh says, *"Also from His signs is that you see the earth bare. Then, when We send rain upon it, it begins to stir and flourish."* As the water permeates into the ground, it revitalises the soil, causing shoots of vegetation to sprout from the ground. As a result of this, many edible plants and fruit grow, which are of tremendous benefit to man. Grass and other plants also grow, which are invaluable to animals.

This is a practical demonstration of Allāh's great powers. In addition to this, it proves that Allāh is perfectly Capable of resurrecting mankind for the Day of Judgment. Man sees this happening every day around him and cannot deny that Allāh is responsible for all this. It is therefore not farfetched to believe that He can repeat the process with dead people. Therefore, Allāh says, *"Verily, the One Who gave life to it (the ground) is the One Who gives life to the dead. Indeed, He has power over all things".*

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُلۡحِدُونَ فِيٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا لَا يَخۡفَوۡنَ عَلَيۡنَآۗ أَفَمَن يُلۡقَىٰ فِي ٱلنَّارِ خَيۡرٌ أَم مَّن يَأۡتِيٓ
ءَامِنٗا يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۚ ٱعۡمَلُواْ مَا شِئۡتُمۡ إِنَّهُۥ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ (40) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِٱلذِّكۡرِ
لَمَّا جَآءَهُمۡۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَكِتَٰبٌ عَزِيزٞ (41) لَّا يَأۡتِيهِ ٱلۡبَٰطِلُ مِنۢ بَيۡنِ يَدَيۡهِ وَلَا مِنۡ خَلۡفِهِۦۖ
تَنزِيلٞ مِّنۡ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٖ (42) مَّا يُقَالُ لَكَ إِلَّا مَا قَدۡ قِيلَ لِلرُّسُلِ مِن قَبۡلِكَۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
لَذُو مَغۡفِرَةٖ وَذُو عِقَابٍ أَلِيمٖ (43) وَلَوۡ جَعَلۡنَٰهُ قُرۡءَانًا أَعۡجَمِيّٗا لَّقَالُواْ لَوۡلَا فُصِّلَتۡ
ءَايَٰتُهُۥٓۖ ءَا۬عۡجَمِيّٞ وَعَرَبِيّٞۗ قُلۡ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ هُدٗى وَشِفَآءٞۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤۡمِنُونَ فِيٓ ءَاذَانِهِمۡ وَقۡرٞ وَهُوَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ عَمًىۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُنَادَوۡنَ مِن مَّكَانِۭ بَعِيدٖ
(44)

(40) Verily those who are averse to Our signs are not hidden from Us. Is the one whom We cast into the Fire better than the one who will arrive safely on the Day of Judgment? Do as you please. Allāh is definitely Watching what you do. (41) Indeed those who disbelieve in the Reminder (Qur'ān) when it came to them (would never have disbelieved if they had contemplated). Without doubt, the Qur'ān is a mighty book. (42) No falsehood can approach it from the front or from the back. It is a revelation from the Wise Who is Most Worthy of praise. (43) You are being told only what was already said to the messengers before you. Without doubt, your Lord is One of immense forgiveness, and also One Who can inflict painful punishment. (44) If We had revealed the Qur'ān in a language other than Arabic, they would have said, "Why are its verses not clearly expounded? How can the scripture not be Arabic when the Holy Prophet is an

Arab?" Say, "It is a guidance for those who believe, as well as a cure. As for those who do not believe, they have props in their ears and it is a means of deviation for them. These are the people who are called from a distant place."

THE "MULHIDĪN" (*INFIDELS*) ARE NOT HIDDEN FROM ALLĀH, SO DO AS YOU PLEASE

The believers fully accept the Qur'ān and derive benefit from it. On the other hand, there are two groups of people who are enemies of the Qur'ān. The first group denies that the Qur'ān is from Allāh. They are called the rejecters (polytheists). The second group does not deny the Qur'ān outright, but their enmity for the Qur'ān is exposed when they distort the interpretation of the Qur'ān to suit their desires. These people are called the "Mulhidīn", and are truly averse to the teachings of the Qur'ān.

Defining the Mulhidīn (*infidels*) in the very same manner, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه added, "They place the words of the Qur'ān where they should not be." Included in this definition are all those people who attempt to unravel the meanings of the 'Mutashābih' (allegorical) verses, as well as those who distort the interpretations of Qur'ānic verses in an effort to prove their fabricated beliefs and innovations.

Hakīmul Ummah Sayyidina Thanwi رحمة الله عليه (in his book 'Masā'ile Sulūk') quotes the above definition of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. Thereafter, he quotes Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbas رضى الله عنه as saying, "Included in the meaning of this verse are all those fanatical saints who refute the accepted narrations of Tafsīr and fabricate (practices and beliefs) that contradict the principles of religion [which are based on the Qur'ān, Ahadīth, and teachings of the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم]."

Allāh says, *"Verily those who are averse to Our signs are not hidden from Us (We are aware of their deeds, and will punish them accordingly). Is the one whom We cast into the Fire better than the one who will arrive safely on the Day of Judgment?"* Any person possessing intelligence will realise that anyone who is saved from the torture of Hell is better than the one who will have to suffer eternal punishment there.

"Do as you please. Allāh is definitely Watching what you do." This is a warning to people. Allāh tells them that they may do as they please but they must realise that Allāh is Watching. Therefore, no deed will pass unnoticed, and they will be punished for every sin.

Thereafter, Allāh speaks about the Qur'ān. Allāh says, *'Indeed those who disbelieve in the Reminder (Qur'ān) when it came to them (would never have disbelieved if they had contemplated). Without doubt, the Qur'ān is a mighty book. No falsehood can approach it from the front or from the back. It is a revelation from the Wise, Who is Most Worthy of praise."*

ALLĀH CONSOLES THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"You are being told only what was already said to the messengers before you."* i.e. Whatever insults the

disbelievers fling at you were also flung at the previous Prophets عليهم السلام. However, they bore everything with patience, so you should do the same. *"Without doubt, your Lord is One of immense forgiveness, and also One Who can inflict a painful punishment.* "Allāh says that if the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم opponents were to accept Islām, they would be forgiven along with the other believers. However, if they persist in their opposition to Islām and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh will surely deal with them.

THE OBSTINACY OF THE DISBELIEVERS

When a person is bent on opposition, he will concoct every possible excuse to substantiate his standpoint. Consequently, the polytheists argued that the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān would have been more evident if it were revealed in a language other than Arabic. However, this was yet another excuse to refute the Qur'ān. Allāh replied to them by saying, *"If We had revealed the Qur'ān in a language other than Arabic, they would have said, 'Why are its verses not clearly expounded? How can the scripture not be Arabic when the Holy Prophet is an Arab?"* Therefore, whether the Qur'ān is in Arabic or any other language, it would be immaterial to the disbelievers, because they would deny it in any event.

THE QUR'ĀN IS A GUIDANCE AND A CURE

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, instructing him to *"Say, 'It (the Qur'ān) is a guidance for those who believe, as well as a cure. As for those who do not believe, they have props in their ears and it is a means of deviation for them. These are the people who are called from a distant place."* i.e. They are like people who are being called by a person from a distant place. Although the person can hear the voice, he cannot understand the message. Similar is the case with the disbelievers. However, the disbelievers do not want to understand the message.

"These are the people who are called from a distant place." The above interpretation of this verse has been quoted from Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه. Other commentators mention that bad names denoting the evil nature of the disbelievers will be used to call them on the Day of Qiyāmah (*judgement*). They will be called from afar so that everyone present there will be able to hear how evil they were.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ فَٱخْتُلِفَ فِيهِ ۗ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِىَ
بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيبٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ مَّنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَآءَ
فَعَلَيْهَا ۗ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٤٦﴾

(45) Verily We gave Mūsa the Book, concerning which disputes arose. If it were not for a decree proceeding from your Lord, a decision would have been given already. Undoubtedly, they are in great doubt about the matter. (46) Whoever does a good deed, does so for his own benefit, and whoever enacts an evil, it will be to his own detriment. Your Lord never oppresses His bondsmen.

EVERY PERSON'S GOOD WILL BENEFIT HIM, WHILE HIS EVIL WILL HARM HIM

In a previous verse, Allāh told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he was being offended just as the earlier Prophets عليهم السلام were offended. Now Allāh makes mention of one of these Prophets عليهم السلام, viz. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"Verily We gave Mūsa the Book (Torah), concerning which disputes arose."* i.e. Some people accepted it, while others rejected. Similar was the attitude of people towards the Qur'ān.

"If it were not for a decree proceeding from your Lord (that they were not to be punished immediately), *a decision* (to punish them) *would have been given already."* If Allāh had not already stipulated the time when they were to be punished, He would have punished them already. However, all His decrees are based on His perfect wisdom.

"Undoubtedly, they are in great doubt about the matter." While some commentators have interpreted *"the matter"* as the Qur'ān, others are of the opinion that it refers to the punishment. Because of their lack of conviction, the disbelievers doubted that they will ever be punished.

"Whoever does a good deed, does so for his own benefit, and whoever enacts an evil, it will be to his own detriment. Your Lord never oppresses His bondsmen." Allāh will reward people in full for their good deeds, and will never punish a person for a sin he did not committed.

PARTTWENTY-FIVE

إِلَيْهِ يُرَدُّ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَمَا تَخْرُجُ مِن ثَمَرَٰتٍ مِّنْ أَكْمَامِهَا وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ أُنثَىٰ وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِۦ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِى قَالُوٓاْ ءَاذَنَّٰكَ مَا مِنَّا مِن شَهِيدٍ (47) وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُواْ يَدْعُونَ مِن قَبْلُ وَظَنُّواْ مَا لَهُم مِّن مَّحِيصٍ (48)

(47) The knowledge of Judgment day is referred to Him only. In His knowledge is every fruit that emerges from its covering, every female that bears, and every female that delivers. The day when they will be asked, "Where are My partners?" They will submit, "We declare to You that none of us can testify (that You have any partner,)." (48) Those that they used to call upon will be lost to them and they will be convinced that they have no escape.

ONLY ALLĀH HAS KNOWLEDGE OF THE HEREAFTER

Allāh declares, *"The knowledge of Judgment day is referred to Him only."* Only Allāh has the knowledge of when Judgment day will take place. Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"They ask you concerning Judgment day, when will it occur? Say, 'The knowledge of it is with my Lord. Only He will manifest it on its time."* [*Surah 7, verse 187*]

Once Sayyidina Jibril عليه السلام appeared in the form of a human to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and asked a few questions. One of these was regarding the time when Judgment day will occur. In reply the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The one being asked knows no more than the questioner" [*Bukhari and Muslim*]. This is the reply any person should give when the same question is posed.

Allāh then mentions certain other phenomena about which only He has knowledge. Allāh says, *"In His knowledge is every fruit that emerges from its covering..."* When a fruit begins to bud, it first appears as a little covering. Thereafter, the fruit gradually develops, until it is ripe. Allāh also has knowledge of *"every female that bears, and every female that delivers."* In fact, as mentioned in other verses, *"Allāh has knowledge of everything."*

Allāh then speaks about the plight of those who reject belief in oneness of Allāh, despite witnessing the numerous signs of Allāh's power and Oneness prevalent around them. On the Day of Judgment day, Allāh will ask them, *"Where are My partners* (that you contrived)?' *They will submit, 'We declare to You*

that none of us can testify (that You have any partner).'" Whereas they were adamant in their belief of polytheism, on the Judgment day the polytheists will deny that they ever perpetrated the vile crime. At the beginning, they will vehemently say, *"By Allāh, our Lord! We were never polytheists!"* However, when they realise that their denial is of no avail, they will admit, *"These are our partners that we used to worship instead of You."* [*Surah Nahl (16), verse 86*]

Allāh says further, *"Those that they used to call upon will be lost to them. .' All the hopes that they pinned in their gods will be dashed, "and they will be convinced that they have no escape."*

لَا يَسْـَٔمُ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ مِن دُعَآءِ ٱلْخَيْرِ وَإِن مَّسَّهُ ٱلشَّرُّ فَيَـُٔوسٌ قَنُوطٌ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَلَئِنْ
أَذَقْنَـٰهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ ضَرَّآءَ مَسَّتْهُ لَيَقُولَنَّ هَـٰذَا لِى وَمَآ أَظُنُّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ قَآئِمَةً وَلَئِن
رُّجِعْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّىٓ إِنَّ لِى عِندَهُۥ لَلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ فَلَنُنَبِّئَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟ وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُم
مِّنْ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَإِذَآ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى ٱلْإِنسَـٰنِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَـَٔا بِجَانِبِهِۦ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ
ٱلشَّرُّ فَذُو دُعَآءٍ عَرِيضٍ ﴿٥١﴾

(49) Man never tires to pray for good. If adversity has to afflict him, he completely loses all hope. (50) If We allow him to taste Our mercy after the adversity that afflicted him, he will certainly say, "I deserve this. I do not think that Judgment day will take place. If I am ever returned to my Lord, I shall definitely have something better than this." So We shall certainly inform the disbelievers of what they did, and We shall definitely make them taste a severe punishment. (51) When We favour man, he is averse and turns away. But when hardship afflicts him, he offers lengthy prayers.

MAN'S LOVE FOR WEALTH, HIS INGRATITUDE, AND REJECTION OF JUDGMENT DAY

Allāh discusses man's psychology in these verses. Allāh says, *'Man never tires to pray for good.* "He keeps asking Allāh for wealth, health and all other good things. He remains happy as long as these positive factors remain with him. However, *"If adversity* (financial loss, illness, etc) *has to afflict him, he completely loses all hope."* He then visualises himself as the only person who is suffering, thinking that his problems will never end. (Such is the condition of people who have not learnt Allāh's Book, have not practised the guidelines detailed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and have not remained in the company of the pious).

"If We allow him to taste Our mercy (wealth, good health, prosperity, etc) *after the adversity that afflicted him, he will certainly say, 'I deserve this.* "'Instead of conceding the fact that the bounty is Allāh's favour, he attributes the good fortune to his ingenuity, thereby hoarding all the credit for himself. This type of

behaviour was displayed by Qārūn, who said, *"I have been granted all of this because of the knowledge I possess."* [*Surah Qasas (28), verse 78*]

When man's difficulty is alleviated, he even begins to deny Judgment day, saying, *"I do not think that Judgment day will take place. If I am ever returned to my Lord, I shall definitely have something better than this."* He thinks that, since he 'deserved' a good life in this world because of his 'knowledge', he will also be deserving of the same in the Hereafter. He fails to realise that whatever he had was purely because of Allāh's favour on him.

Allāh says further, *"So We shall certainly inform the disbelievers of what they did, and We shall definitely make them taste a severe punishment."* It is only in the Ākhirah (*hereafter*) that the disbelievers will realise the error of their ways, and that (because of their deeds) they 'deserve' only punishment and humiliation.

Summing up man's attitude, Allāh says, *"When We favour man, he is averse and turns away* (i.e. he does not acknowledge Allāh's bounty and is not grateful). *But when hardship afflicts him, he offers lengthy prayers."* Instead of thanking Allāh for His favour, man becomes proud of himself whenever he is blessed with a bounty. The only time he turns to Allāh is when he is in dire straits. This behaviour is all too apparent everywhere.

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ كَفَرْتُم بِهِۦ مَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ هُوَ فِى
شِقَاقٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا فِى ٱلْءَافَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ
ٱلْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٥٣﴾ أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّن لِّقَآءِ
رَبِّهِمْ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّهُۥ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ مُّحِيطٌۢ ﴿٥٤﴾

(52) Say, "Tell me. If this Qur'ān is really from Allāh and you reject it, who will be further astray than the person who is in fanatical opposition?" (53) We shall soon show them Our signs on the horizons and within themselves, until it becomes clear to them that it is certainly the truth. Is it not sufficient that your Lord is Witness over everything? (54) Behold! They are in doubt about meeting their Lord. Behold! He Encompasses everything.

THE REJECTERS ARE INVITED TO PONDER ABOUT THE QUR'ĀN

These verses bring Surah HāMīm Sajdah to a close. The Surah began with mention of the Qur'ān being a clearly expounded revelation from Allāh. As the Surah progressed, more mention was made of the Qur'ān. Now, at the end, Allāh exhorts people to ponder about the Qur'ān, keeping their welfare in mind. Since the disbelievers reject the Qur'ān after it has been established with proof that Allāh revealed the Qur'ān, Allāh enjoins them to reflect that *"If this Qur'ān is really from Allāh and you reject it,* (then it will be clear that your opposition was unwarranted. So tell me,) *who will be further astray than the person who is in fanatical opposition?"*

Such people will certainly suffer punishment in the Hereafter. Therefore, before entering the realm of the Hereafter, the non-believers should carefully consider the matter in this very world.

Allāh says further, *"We shall soon show them Our signs on the horizons..."* The Arabic word "āfāq" (translated above as *"horizons"*) refers to the skies, the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the rivers, and everything else that is visible. Some commentators mention that the word refers to the incidents of the previous nations, which are brought to mind when one sees the ruins of their civilisations.

Allāh adds that He also shows man His signs *"within themselves"*. This refers to the various changes and stages that the human body experiences (as well as the wonders of the anatomy). An intelligent person will heed these signs and derive a lesson from them. People should ponder over these *"until it becomes clear to them that it* (the Qur'ān) *is certainly the truth."* Eventually every person will realise that the Qur'ān is certainly the truth from Allāh, even though many will not admit it.

"Is it not sufficient that your Lord is Witness over everything?" Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that Allāh's testimony to his Prophet hood is sufficient. He should therefore ignore the taunts and abuses of the disbelievers and polytheists.

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"Behold! They are in doubt about meeting their Lord. Behold! He Encompasses everything."* Therefore, He will certainly take them to task for their evil. They can have no escape from Him.

سورة الشورى

Makkan	Surah Ash-Shura	Verses 53

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

حمٓ ﴿1﴾ عٓسٓقٓ ﴿2﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ يُوحِىٓ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿3﴾ لَهُۥ
مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿4﴾ تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِن
فَوْقِهِنَّ ۚ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿5﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱللَّهُ حَفِيظٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَآ أَنتَ
عَلَيْهِم بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿6﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّتُنذِرَ أُمَّ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا
وَتُنذِرَ يَوْمَ ٱلْجَمْعِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ فَرِيقٌ فِى ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيقٌ فِى ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿7﴾ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَهُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن يُدْخِلُ مَن يَشَآءُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ وَٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ مَا لَهُم مِّن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا
نَصِيرٍ ﴿8﴾ أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۖ فَٱللَّهُ هُوَ ٱلْوَلِىُّ وَهُوَ يُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿9﴾

In the ,name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) HāMīm. (2) Ayn Sīn Qāf. (3) In this manner does Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise send revelation to you and to those before you. (4) To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Exalted, the Grand. (5) The skies can almost be rent asunder above them as the angels glorify the praises of their Lord and seek forgiveness for those on earth. Behold! Allāh is certainly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful. (6) Allāh is Vigilant over those who adopt patrons besides Allāh. You are not a guardian over them. (7) In this manner did We reveal the Arabic Qur'ān to you so that you may warn the Mother of all cities, and those around her; so that you may warn them about the Day of Gathering, about which there shall be no doubt. A group shall be in Jannah (paradise), while another shall be in the Blaze. (8) If Allāh willed, He would have made them a single nation. However, He will enter whoever he wills into His mercy,

and there shall be no friend nor assistant for the oppressors. (9) Or do they adopt patrons apart from Allāh? Indeed, Allāh is truly the Protecting Friend, and He shall resurrect the dead. He has power over all things.

ALLĀH IS MIGHTY, WISE, EXALTED, GRAND, MOST FORGIVING, MOST MERCIFUL

After introducing the Surah with a few Muqatta'āt letters, Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"In this manner* (i.e. just as this Surah is being revealed with all its associated benefits) *does Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise send revelation to you and to those before you. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Exalted, the Grand."*

"The skies can almost be rent asunder above them..." This verse tells of the preposterous nature of the claims that the polytheists make. Their polytheistic beliefs are so outrageous that it could cause the skies to perish. Allāh therefore removes all credibility that may seem to exist in the claims of the polytheists before actually denying them in the forthcoming verses. By this interpretation, the verse will resemble verses 90 and 91 of Surah Maryam (*Surah 19*), where Allāh says, *"The heavens may split asunder because of it, the earth may be cleaved open and the mountains may crash to smithereens. All this because they ascribed children to Allāh."* [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that, because the skies are filled with angels who *"glorify the praises of their Lord"* and indulge in so many other duties delegated by Allāh, it is not an exaggeration to state that *"The skies can almost be rent asunder...*

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The skies are creaking, and really ought to creak. I swear by the Being in Whose control lies my life! There is not a space of four fingers without an angel placing his forehead there in prostration before Allāh." [*"Mishkāt" p. 457, from Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah*]

"the angels glorify the praises of their Lord" This means that they declare His purity from everything that is not befitting of His exalted status. At the same time, they also praise Allāh because of His most excellent attributes. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has quoted from Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه that "Tasbīh (*glorification*)" refers to the angels exclaiming *"Subhānallāh"* because of their astonishment at the polytheists, who are prepared to bear the burden of Allāh's wrath because of their beliefs.

Allāh adds that the angels also *"seek forgiveness for those (believers) on earth. Behold! Allāh is certainly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."*

Thereafter, Allāh speaks about the polytheists when He says, *"Allāh is Vigilant over those who adopt patrons besides Allāh. You* [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] *are not a guardian over them.* "Allāh will deal with them as He pleases, and when He pleases.

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further when he says, *"In this manner did We reveal the Arabic Qur'ān to you so that you may warn* (the inhabitants of) *the Mother of all cities* (Makkah), *and those around her* (in Arabia); *so*

that you may warn them about the Day of Gathering (Judgment day), *about which there shall be no doubt."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to warn people about the grave consequences of disbelief and polytheism. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and all the Prophets عليهم السلام warned people about the imminence of the Day of Judgment, when Allāh will pass judgement between the evil and the righteous. As a result, *"A group shall be in Heaven, while another shall be in the Blaze."*

Allāh says further, *"If Allāh willed, He would have made them a single nation (of Believers). However, He will enter whoever he wills into His mercy and there shall be no friend nor assistant for the oppressors."* Allāh guides people according to His wisdom. A verse of Surah Sajdah reads, *"If We willed, We would have granted every soul its guidance."* However, Allāh has granted every person a choice to either do good or to sin. It is for this reason that Allāh will punish people for misusing this choice.

Allāh then refutes the beliefs of the polytheists when He says, *"Or do they adopt patrons apart from Allāh? Indeed, Allāh is truly the Protecting Friend, and He shall resurrect the dead. He has power over all things."*

وَمَا ٱخۡتَلَفۡتُمۡ فِيهِ مِن شَيۡءٖ فَحُكۡمُهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبِّي عَلَيۡهِ تَوَكَّلۡتُ وَإِلَيۡهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿١٠﴾ فَاطِرُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنۡ أَنفُسِكُمۡ أَزۡوَٰجٗا وَمِنَ ٱلۡأَنۡعَٰمِ أَزۡوَٰجٗا يَذۡرَؤُكُمۡ فِيهِۚ لَيۡسَ كَمِثۡلِهِۦ شَيۡءٞۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾ لَهُۥ مَقَالِيدُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۖ يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقۡدِرُۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٞ ﴿١٢﴾

(10) The decision rests with Allāh concerning the matters about which you differ. That Allāh is my Lord. In Him do I trust, and to Him do I turn. (11) Allāh is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He has created spouses for you from among you, and has also created pairs among the animals. He has created you within the wombs of your mothers. There is nothing like Him, and He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing. (12) To Him belongs the keys of the heavens and the earth. He increases sustenance for whoever He wills, and also straitens. Undoubtedly, He has knowledge of everything.

ALL THE MATTERS THAT YOU DIFFER IN WILL BE REFERRED TO ALLĀH, AND HE HAS CREATED YOU IN PAIRS

The attributes of Allāh are described in these verses. Allāh says, *"The decision rests with Allāh concerning the matters about which you differ."* The Book of Allāh (the Qur'ān) should be the judge in all those matters in which people differ. The law of the Qur'ān should be accepted as final in any matter. Thereafter, Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to declare, *"That Allāh is my Lord. In Him do I trust (therefore, I have no fear for anything you may do),*

and to Him do I turn."

"Allāh is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He has created spouses for you from among you, and has also created pairs among the animals. He has created you within the wombs of your mothers." Allāh has created all of mankind from the single pair of Sayyidina Ādam and Hawwā عليهما السلام. Thereafter, the process of reproduction continued, whereby multitudes of men and women have been born. In a similar manner, Allāh has also created animals as male and female, permitting their generations to flourish in succession.

THERE IS NOTHING LIKE ALLĀH

"There is nothing like Him, and He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing." Allāh has been forever and will be forever. Nothing preceded Him, and nothing will succeed Him. None possesses any attributes like Him, nor does anything resemble Him at all. If any of His attributes is given for another being, the resemblance will be only in the term used, not in the essence and true meaning of the attribute. It will therefore be wrong for any person to claim that Allāh has a physical body, or that he is confined to any space, direction or time. There is nothing that can be compared to Allāh in any way.

Reinforcing the belief in Allāh's overwhelming superiority, Allāh adds, *"To Him belongs the keys of the heavens and the earth. He increases sustenance for whoever He wills, and also straitens. Undoubtedly, He has knowledge of everything."*

۞ شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ ۖ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ ۚ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ ۚ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَن يُنِيبُ (13) وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى لَّقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُورِثُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيبٍ (14)

(13) Allāh has ordained for you the same Dīn (religion) that He ordained for Nūh, as well as what He ordained for Ibrahīm, Mūsa and Isā; "Establish the Dīn (religion of Islām) and do not be divided". That towards which you call the idolaters is weighty on them. Allāh draws whoever He wills towards Himself, and guides towards Himself the one who is penitent. (14) They divided only after knowledge came to them, because of the animosity between themselves. If it were not for a decree that issued forth from your Lord (allowing them grace) until a prescribed term, their matter would have been decided. Indeed, those who were given the Book after them are in grave doubt concerning it.

ALLĀH HAS ORDAINED FOR YOU THAT SAME DĪN *(RELIGION)* THAT HE ORDAINED FOR SAYYIDINA NŪH, MŪSA, AND ĪSA عليهم السلام

The religion's of all the former Prophets عليهم السلام were based on the belief of oneness of Allāh and obedience to Allāh. Although the religion's differed in various detailed aspects of worship *(Ibādah)* and social conduct, the basic principle of oneness of Allāh was a common factor in all. In this regard, Allāh says, "Allāh has ordained for you the same religion that He ordained for Nūh, as well as what He ordained for Ibrahīm, Mūsa and Isā..." All the Prophets عليهم السلام, including the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم carried the same message forward. The final religion that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم brought includes the basic principles of belief that were common in all the previous religions, as well as a complete code of social and moral behavioural etiquette.

"'Establish the religion of Islām, and do not be divided." This is an exhortation to remain steadfast on the religion of Islām without altering any part of it. This was ordained for all the Prophets عليهم السلام. A person should therefore not believe in a part of the religion while disbelieving in another part, neither should he practise a part while discarding another part. This was the practice of the Bani Isra'īl, because of which Allāh reproached them saying, *"Do you believe in a part of the Book and reject a part?"* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 85*]

THE POLYTHEISTS DISLIKE THE INVITATION OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"That towards which you call the idolaters is weighty on them."* There were two reasons because of which the polytheists despised the preaching of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The first was that they disliked the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was inviting towards One Allāh, whereas they believed in a multitude of other gods.

The second reason was that they disliked the fact that Allāh made Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم a Prophet instead of one of the affluent members of their society. It was in reply to this that Allāh says, *"Allāh draws whoever He wills towards Himself and guides towards Himself the one who is penitent."* Allāh confers prestige on whoever He wills from among His bondsmen, and only He can lead people towards guidance.

PEOPLE SEPARATE AFTER RECEIVING KNOWLEDGE

"They divided only after knowledge came to them, because of the animosity between themselves." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه mentioned that this verse refers to the Quraysh. Before the appearance of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they used to swear by Allāh that they would certainly become the most rightly guided people if Allāh had to send a Prophet to them. However, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was made a Prophet, they began to dispute among themselves, as a result of which some accepted, while others did not.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has also mentioned that this verse could well apply to the Ahlul Kitāb *(the people of Book)*. While the Jews refused to

accept the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because of the jealousy they bore towards him, the Christians also did not want to believe in him. It was not because of their aversion to Islām that they refused to accept, nor because of any personal grudge towards the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but they refused to accept only because of their overwhelming love for wealth and position.

Allāh says further, *"If it were not for a decree that issued forth from your Lord* (allowing them grace) *until a prescribed term, their matter would have been decided."* They would have deserved punishment already if Allāh had not predetermined that their punishment was due at a prescribed time. Others commentators have mentioned that the *"prescribed term"* refers to the Hereafter, when the disbelievers will be unable to escape Allāh's punishment.

".....Indeed, those who were given the Book after them are in grave doubt concerning it." Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه mentions that the verse refers to the Ahlul Kitāb *(the people of Book)* (Jews and Christians). They therefore inherited the division that was created before them. Other commentators have mentioned that the verse refers to the Quraysh, who were given the Qur'ān after the Ahlul Kitāb *(the people of Book)* were given their respective scriptures. In this case *"concerning it"* would mean "concerning the Qur'ān" or "concerning the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم".

فَلِذَٰلِكَ فَادْعُ ۖ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَقُلْ آمَنتُ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
مِن كِتَابٍ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمُ ۖ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ
أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۖ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ ۖ اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٥﴾ وَالَّذِينَ
يُحَاجُّونَ فِي اللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ مَا اسْتُجِيبَ لَهُ حُجَّتُهُمْ دَاحِضَةٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ﴿١٦﴾ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ ۗ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ
السَّاعَةَ قَرِيبٌ ﴿١٧﴾ يَسْتَعْجِلُ بِهَا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهَا ۖ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مُشْفِقُونَ
مِنْهَا وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهَا الْحَقُّ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُمَارُونَ فِي السَّاعَةِ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿١٨﴾
اللَّهُ لَطِيفٌ بِعِبَادِهِ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۖ وَهُوَ الْقَوِيُّ الْعَزِيزُ ﴿١٩﴾

(15) This is what you should call towards. Be steadfast as you have been commanded, and do not follow their whims. Say, "I believe in the Book that Allāh has revealed, and I have been commanded to maintain justice between you people. Allāh is our Lord and your Lord. Our deeds are for us, and yours are for you. There is no dispute between yourselves and us. Allāh shall gather us all together, and to Him shall be our return." (16) Those who argue about their Lord after He has been accepted, their argument is useless before their Lord. Upon them is wrath, and they will suffer a severe punishment. (17) It is Allāh Who revealed the Book with the truth, as well as the Balance. How could you know

that Judgment day is probably very close? (18) Those who do not believe in it seek to hasten you. Those who believe in it, fear it and know that it is the truth. Behold! Those who have doubts about Judgment day have deviation far away. (19) Allāh is Compassionate towards His bondsmen. He sustains whoever he wills, and He is the Powerful, the Mighty.

THE COMMAND TO BE STEADFAST AND JUST

Referring to the religion that Allāh ordained for Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, Allāh says further, *"This* (religion of Islām) *is what you should call towards. Be steadfast as you have been commanded, and do not follow their whims."* If any inclinations have to be shown towards the disbelievers, steadfastness will be lost. Even though the disbelievers detest the religion, no compromises can be made.

Allāh instructs further, *"Say, 'I believe in the Book that Allāh has revealed, and I have been commanded to maintain justice between you people.* "'i.e. I cannot command you to do anything which I do not do myself, neither will I allow you to suffer while I am at leisure.

"Allāh is our Lord and your Lord. (Therefore, we all have to obey Him and follow His religion. If you refuse, then remember) *Our deeds are for us, and yours are for you* (Allāh will take every person to task accordingly). *There is no dispute between yourselves and us* (because we have brought the message to you clearly). *Allāh shall gather us all together, and to Him shall be our return."* Allāh will reward those who believed in oneness of Allāh, and will punish those who perpetrated polytheism.

THE CLAIM OF THE DISBELIEVERS IS USELESS

"Those who argue about their Lord (i.e. about His religion) after He (His religion) has been accepted (by many sensible person), their argument is useless before their Lord." Although they may think that their arguments carry weight, these arguments can never come close to displacing the proofs that substantiate oneness of Allāh. When they reach Allāh's court on the Day of Judgment, the harsh reality will dawn on them that *"Upon them is* (Allāh's) *wrath, and they will suffer a severe punishment."*

The phrase *"after He* (His religion) *has been accepted"* tells us that many people had accepted the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They saw the miracles of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمand, when they contemplated over the matter, they reached the conclusion that he was certainly no madman. As a result, they realised that it was foolish to resist him, and accepted Islām wholeheartedly.

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"It is Allāh Who revealed the Book with the truth, as well as the Balance."* Most commentators, including Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, are of the opinion that *"the Balance"* refers to justice and equity, because the scale is normally used as a measure to weigh justly. Other commentators state that it refers to rewards and punishment, which Allāh will give to the obedient and the sinful respectively. A third group of commentators mention that the *"Balance"* refers to scales that will be erected on the Day of Judgment to weigh

the deeds of people.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT JUDGMENT DAY IS VERY CLOSE

Allāh asks, *"How could you know that Judgment day is probably very close?"* Although the verse addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is intended as a note of concern for all of mankind. Every person should be concerned about his plight in the Hereafter. Since the actual time of Judgment day has not been specified, there is every possibility that the Judgment day will be very soon.

"Those who do not believe in it (Judgment day) seek to hasten you (by asking you to show it to them). (On the other hand,) Those who believe in it, fear it and know that it is the truth. Behold! Those who have doubts about Judgment day have deviated far away." This is because they refuse to accept despite the fact that they have witnessed the signs that indicate the truth.

"Allāh is Compassionate towards His bondsmen. He sustains whoever he wills, and He is the Powerful, the Mighty." Allāh sustains those who believe as well as those who disbelieve and who are sinful. The multitude of sins that people commit does not prevent Allāh's compassion from catering for their needs. Allāh's compassion is demonstrated in this manner and many other ways in this world. Apart from these, His compassion will also shine forth in the Hereafter.

Among the many interpretations of *"Allāh is Compassionate towards His bondsmen"*, Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has included the following:

- Allāh rewards a person far in excess of the deeds he carries out.
- Allāh does not command people to carry out deeds that are beyond their capacity.
- Allāh never rejects their pleas for help.
- Allāh never allows anyone with hope in Him to become despondent.

"He is the Powerful, the Mighty." None can stop His compassion and grasp from reaching their target.

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُۥ فِى حَرْثِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِۦ
مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْآخِرَةِ مِن نَّصِيبٍ ﴿20﴾

(20) Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We shall increase its harvest for him. And We shall grant a part of this world's harvest to the one who desires it; and he will have no share in the Hereafter.

THE SEEKER OF THE HEREAFTER WILL HAVE AN INCREASE, WHILE THE SEEKER OF THIS WORLD WILL HAVE NO SHARE IN THE HEREAFTER

Allāh discusses the rewards of people in accordance to their objectives in this world. Allāh says, *"Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We shall increase its harvest for him."* Allāh will grant a great return to those who believe in Him, follow His religion, and carry out good deeds in an effort to please Him. Every good deed will bring a reward that is multiplied a minimum of tenfold. Allāh may even increase this seven hundred times, as He says in verse 261 of Surah Baqarah, *"The likeness of those who spend in the way of Allāh is as a grain which grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. Allāh gives increased manifold to those whom He wills. Allāh is All Embracing, All Knowing."*

The multiplication of rewards is therefore not restricted to seven hundred, but has no limit. The Ahadīth bear testimony to the fact that the person who preaches and propagates the religion and the carrying out of good deeds, will receive the rewards of every person who carries out the same deeds. This will not diminish the rewards of those carrying out the deeds. Rewards in the Hereafter will continue to flourish just as the grains of wheat continue to multiply after being planted:

On the other hand, *"And We shall grant a part of this world's harvest to the one who desires it; and he will have no share in the Hereafter."* When a person focuses only on the gains of this world, and he concentrates all his efforts on acquiring it, Allāh will grant him exactly what he wants, or less. Even if he acquires all the wealth of the world, it will be insignificant compared to the gains of the Hereafter. Then too, he will receive only that much of the world which Allāh wills that he should have. It is also not important that a person should achieve whatever he wants in this world, since this world is not even the true abode of the believers.

Verses 18 and 19 of Surah Bani Isra'īl (*Surah 17*) emphasise the same point about desiring the pleasure of this world rather than the Ākhirah (*Hereafter*). Allāh says, *"Whoever desires the pleasures of this world, We shall grant whatever We will for whoever We will in this very world, and then We will appoint Hell for him. He will enter it despicably and rejected. And whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts himself for it as he ought to and is a believer, then such are the people whose deeds will be appreciated."*

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَٰٓؤُا۟ شَرَعُوا۟ لَهُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنۢ بِهِ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةُ
ٱلْفَصْلِ لَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾ تَرَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ
مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ وَهُوَ وَاقِعٌۢ بِهِمْ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ
فِى رَوْضَاتِ ٱلْجَنَّاتِ ۖ لَهُم مَّا يَشَآءُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَضْلُ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿٢٢﴾
ذَٰلِكَ ٱلَّذِى يُبَشِّرُ ٱللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ ۗ قُل لَّآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا

ٱلْمَوَدَّةَ فِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ ۗ وَمَن يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُۥ فِيهَا حُسْنًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ أَمْ
يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۖ فَإِن يَشَإِ ٱللَّهُ يَخْتِمْ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ ۗ وَيَمْحُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَٰطِلَ وَيُحِقُّ ٱلْحَقَّ
بِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٢٤﴾

(21) Or do they have partners who have ordained for them such things in religion which Allāh has not permitted? If it were not for a decisive decree, the matter would have been decided between them. There shall certainly be an excruciating punishment for the oppressors. (22) You will see the oppressors fearing what they earned, whereas the punishment will have already befallen them. Those who believe and do righteous deeds will be in the gardens of Heaven. They shall have whatever they desire with their Lord. This is definitely a great favour. (23) These are the glad tidings that Allāh conveys to those bondsmen of His who believe and do good deeds. Say, "I ask of you no recompense, except the love between relatives. We will increase the beauty of the deed that a person carries out, for Allāh is surely the Most Forgiving, the Appreciative. (24) Or do they say that he has invented a lie against Allāh? If Allāh wills, He could seal your heart. Allāh eradicates falsehood and establishes the truth with His words. Undoubtedly He has thorough knowledge of the secrets of the heart.

THE SINFUL ONES WILL BE APPREHENSIVE OF THEIR DEEDS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, WHILE BELIEVERS WILL BE IN THE GARDENS OF HEAVEN

Referring to the polytheists, Allāh says, *"Or do they have* (ascribe) *partners* (to Allāh) *who have ordained for them such things in religion which Allāh has not permitted?"* This is a rhetorical question, which emphasises that none has the ability nor the authority to introduce anything into the religion. Since the false gods of the polytheists have no jurisdiction in the matter, it will be foolish to worship them.

Although the polytheists deserve immediate punishment, they are not punished immediately because Allāh has already decreed that they would be punished at a later stage in this world. Otherwise, they will certainly suffer the most excruciating punishment in the Hereafter. They should never be foolish enough to rejoice because of the apparent delay in punishment. The more grace they have, the greater will be the punishment they draw towards themselves. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"If it were not for a decisive decree* (to defer punishment), *the matter would have been decided between them. There shall certainly be an excruciating punishment for the oppressors."*

Addressing the reader, Allāh says that on the Day of Judgment, *"You will see the oppressors fearing what they earned, whereas the punishment (on account of what they earned) will have already befallen them. (On the contrary,) Those who believe and do righteous deeds will be in the gardens of Heaven. They shall have whatever they desire with their Lord. This is definitely a great favour. These are the glad tidings that Allāh conveys to those bondsmen of His who believe and do good deeds."*

NO WORLDLY RETURN IS EXPECTED FOR PREACHING

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"Say, 'I ask of you no recompense except the love between relatives.'"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is instructed to make it clear to people that he requires no remuneration from them because his efforts are solely to please Allāh. Of course, since he was related to the Quraysh, he deserved to receive the cordial treatment expected from relatives. The Quraysh were duty-bound to maintain good relations with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and to refrain from harming him. Not only did the Quraysh refuse to accept the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but they also failed to honour the rights of their kinship, which was contrary to Arab tradition as well.

"We will increase the beauty of the deed that a person carries out (by crediting it with rewards that far exceed its worth), for Allāh is surely the Most Forgiving, the Appreciative." Therefore, constantly seek forgiveness from Allāh, and make every effort to perform good deeds.

REFUTING THOSE WHO REGARDED THE QUR'ĀN AS A FABRICATION

Allāh says further, *"Or do they say that he* [the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *has invented a lie against Allāh?"* In response to this allegation, Allāh says, *"If Allāh wills, He could seal your heart."* As a punishment for inventing a lie (as claimed), Allāh could easily seal the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم heart, thereby causing him to forget the Qur'ān. However, Allāh continued to reveal the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, making it clear to all that he was certainly Allāh's chosen Prophet .

"Allāh eradicates falsehood (as propagated by the polytheists) and establishes the truth (Islām) with His words. Undoubtedly He has thorough knowledge of the secrets of the heart." Therefore, Allāh is perfectly Capable of punishing people for the ill that they do.

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَقْبَلُ ٱلتَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَعْفُوا۟ عَنِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾
وَيَسْتَجِيبُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦ ۚ وَٱلْكَـٰفِرُونَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
شَدِيدٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ ۞ وَلَوْ بَسَطَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ لَبَغَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَـٰكِن يُنَزِّلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَّا يَشَآءُ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ بِعِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُنَزِّلُ ٱلْغَيْثَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا۟ وَيَنشُرُ
رَحْمَتَهُۥ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْوَلِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٨﴾

(25) It is Allāh Who accepts repentance from His bondsmen, Who pardons sins and Who knows what you do. (26) He responds (to the supplications) of those who believe and who do righteous deeds, and He increases His favour for them. There shall be severe punishment for the disbelievers. (27) If Allāh increases sustenance for His bondsmen, they would rebel on earth. Instead, He sends

according to a stipulated measure as He pleases. He is certainly Informed and Ever Watchful over His bondsmen. (28) It is He Who sends the rain after people have lost hope, and distributes His mercy. He is the Protecting Friend, Most Worthy of praise.

ALLĀH GIVES SUSTENANCE AS HE WILLS, AND SENDS RAINS AFTER PEOPLE HAVE LOST HOPE

Allāh describes His tremendous attributes and immense favours in the above verses. Allāh says:

First. *"It is Allāh Who accepts repentance from His bondsmen, Who pardons sins..."*

Second. It is Allāh *"Who knows what you do."* Allāh knows whether a person's repentance is sincere or merely lip service.

Third. *"He responds (to the supplications) of those who believe and who do righteous deeds (including abstaining from Unlawful food)..."*

Fourth. *"and He increases His favour for them."* Included in this is the fact that Allāh multiplies the reward for any good deed, even though the deed may be slight.

Fifth. *"There shall be severe punishment for the disbelievers."* Therefore, people should not be deceived by the world. They should make every effort to save themselves from the punishment of Hell.

Sixth. *"If Allāh increases sustenance for His bondsmen, they would rebel on earth. Instead, He sends according to a stipulated measure as He pleases. He is certainly Informed and Ever Watchful over His bondsmen."* According to His infinite wisdom. Allāh makes some people wealthy, while keeping others poor. There would have been tremendous rebellion and anarchy on earth if every person were rich.

Seventh. *"It is He Who sends the rain after people have lost hope (because of a delay in rains), and distributes His mercy."* As a result all of creation benefits from the rains.

Eighth. *"He is the Protecting Friend, Most Worthy of praise."* Allāh sees to the needs of all His creation, and every attribute and action of His deserves praise.

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَثَّ فِيهِمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا
يَشَآءُ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَمَآ أَصَٰبَكُم مِّن مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا۟ عَن

كَثِيرٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَمَا أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ
﴿٣١﴾ وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ الْجَوَارِ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ ﴿٣٢﴾ إِن يَشَأْ يُسْكِنِ الرِّيحَ فَيَظْلَلْنَ رَوَاكِدَ عَلَىٰ
ظَهْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ أَوْ يُوبِقْهُنَّ بِمَا كَسَبُوا وَيَعْفُ عَن كَثِيرٍ
﴿٣٤﴾ وَيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي آيَاتِنَا مَا لَهُم مِّن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

(29) From Allāh's signs are the creation of the heavens and the earth, as well as every creature that He has dispersed within the two. He has the Power to gather them all whenever He pleases. (30) The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn, and Allāh pardons a great deal. (31) You cannot escape on earth, and you have no Protecting Friend, nor any Helper besides Allāh. (32) Among His signs are the ships at sea like mountains. (33) If Allāh wills, He could stop the winds, causing the ships to stand stationary on the surface of the sea. There are certainly signs in this for every person who is extremely patient and grateful. (34) Or Allāh could annihilate them because of the deeds they earn. And He pardons a great deal. (35) Those who dispute about His signs then learn that they shall have no escape.

THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS, THE EARTH AND ALL LIFE ARE ALLĀH'S SIGNS

Describing His creative ability, Allāh says, *"From Allāh 's signs are the creation of the heavens and the earth, as well as every creature that He has dispersed within the two."* Since the creation are so many in number, one should never think that they are beyond Allāh's control because *"He has the Power to gather them all whenever He pleases (as He will do on the Day of Judgment)."*

ADVERSITIES ARE BECAUSE OF MAN'S ACTIONS

Allāh declares, *"The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn..."* However Allāh does not punish people for every evil they commit. *"Allāh pardons a great deal (of sins)."* If Allāh were to take people to task for every sin, they would not have any rest, but would have to face an endless barrage of adversities.

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Whenever a small or great adversity afflicts a person, it is on account of his sins. However, the sins that Allāh pardons are much more than those that He punishes." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The believer man and woman repeatedly suffer hardships involving themselves, their wealth and their families, until they reach Allāh without any sin to their account." [*Tirmidhi*]

This hadith makes it clear that adversities cause sins to be forgiven. Therefore, a person suffering hardships will be cleansed of all sins when he reaches the Hereafter. It is also a blessing that a person suffers punishment in this

world rather than in the Hereafter, because a single punishment of the Hereafter is much more severe than every hardship of this world.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that Allāh may want to elevate the rank of a person to a great degree, but the person's deeds are insufficient to qualify him for the rank. Allāh then afflicts the person with difficulties that affect his health, wealth and family. Allāh then grants him patience to endure the adversities, until the person attains the rank that Allāh has ordained for him. [*"Mishkāt" p. 137, from Ahmad and Abu Dawūd*]

"The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn....." This verse is addressed to the general Muslim public, and not to the Prophets عليهم السلام. Therefore, one cannot say that the Prophets عليهم السلام suffer adversities on account of their sins, because they were sinless. The Prophets عليهم السلام suffered adversities so that their ranks could be elevated.

"You cannot escape on earth..." People will remain in whatever condition Allāh has placed them in. It will be futile to turn to others for assistance because *"you have no Protecting Friend, nor any Helper besides Allāh."*

"Among His signs are the ships at sea like mountains." These ships are large enough to carry thousands of tonnes in human and mercantile cargo. *"If Allāh wills, He could stop the winds, causing the ships to stand stationary on the surface of the sea. There are certainly signs in this for every person who is extremely patient and grateful."* The winds are at Allāh's command, and will not propel ships if Allāh stops them. This verse denotes that the movement of the ships at sea is dependent on Allāh. Therefore, even ships that are mechanically propelled require fuel to move. This fuel (petrol, diesel, coal) is also Allāh's creation. If Allāh stops the supply of these forms of fuel, these ships will also be stationary. In addition to this, it was because of Allāh's inspiration that man was able to design and build the engines that propel these ships. Therefore, man is totally dependent on Allāh for everything.

Just as Allāh has the power to stop the winds, He is also Capable of destroying people as they travel on these ships because of their sins. However, Allāh does not sink every ship because of the sins of the occupants. Rather *"He pardons a great deal* (of their sins)." Allāh does not punish people immediately, but defers their punishment until a later date, or until the Hereafter.

Eventually, when the people of a ship are about to be shipwrecked (or people suffering any other calamity), they *"then learn that they shall have no escape."*

فَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّن شَيْءٍ فَمَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا۟ هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ
إِذَآ أَصَابَهُمُ ٱلْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنتَصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

(36) Whatever you have been given is merely an article of this worldly life. What is with Allāh is better and more lasting for those who believe in and trust their Lord... (37) ... .And who abstain from major sins, immorality, and who pardon when they are angry. (38) ... .And those who respond to (the commands of) their Lord, who establish Salāh, whose affairs (are decided) by mutual consultation between themselves, and who spend from what We have provided for them. (39) And those who retaliate when oppression affects them.

WHATEVER YOU HAVE ARE ARTICLES OF THE WORLDLY EXISTENCE, WHILE THAT WHICH IS WITH ALLĀH SHALL BE FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND TRUST IN HIM

Describing the ephemeral nature of this world and the permanence of the Hereafter, Allāh says, *"Whatever you have been given is merely an article of this worldly life. What is with Allāh is better and more lasting for those who believe in and trust their Lord..."* Allāh then describes the attributes of the believers, when He says that they:

1. "trust their Lord"
2. "abstain from major sins, immorality"
3. "Pardon when they are angry."
4. "respond to (the commands of) their Lord."
5. "who establish Salāh (in the proper manner)."
6. "whose affairs (are decided) by mutual consultation between themselves."
7. "who spend from what We have provided for them."
8. *"who retaliate when oppression affects them."* They retaliate only to the extent of the oppression perpetrates against them -not more.

These are the salient qualities of a believer, which he should display at all times and on all occasions.

"Whatever you have been given is merely an article (asset) of this worldly life." This verse tells us that the commodities of this world are of benefit to one and all, be they believers or disbelievers. This verse also denotes that the things of this world are limited to this world, and will not proceed into the Hereafter. Of course, if they are utilised to procure rewards in the Hereafter, the benefit will extend there as well.

"And those who retaliate when oppression affects them." This verse denotes that it will be permissible for an oppressed person to avenge the injustice done to him. Naturally, the retaliation should not exceed the damage done. Details about this will follow shortly.

وَجَزَٰٓؤُاْ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُۥ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿40﴾

وَلَمَنِ ٱنتَصَرَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِۦ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِم مِّن سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤١﴾ إِنَّمَا ٱلسَّبِيلُ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَيَبْغُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَلَمَن صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤٣﴾

(40) The retribution for an evil is a proportionate response. As for the one who pardons and makes amends, his reward will be with Allāh. Verily, Allāh does not like the oppressors. (41) There will be no blame on the one who takes revenge after he has been wronged. (42) There will be blame only on those who oppress people and unjustly rebel on earth. An excruciating punishment shall be the lot of these people. (43) Whoever exercises patience and pardons, this is certainly among the most resolute matters.

PROPORTIONATE REVENGE MAY BE TAKEN, AND THE REWARD FOR PARDONING LIES WITH ALLĀH

The previous verse read: *"And those who retaliate when oppression affects them."* Since this verse does not provide details about the limits of retaliation, Allāh adds the details to the above verses. Allāh says, *"The retribution for an evil is a proportionate response."* A wronged person may retaliate only to the extent of the wrong done to one. If the retaliation exceeds the extent of the wrong, the person retaliating will then be guilty of injustice.

"As for the one who pardons and makes amends, his reward will be with Allāh." Although it is permissible to take revenge, it will be best to pardon the aggressor. This pardon will not be in vain because Allāh will amply reward a person for this. If a person chooses not to pardon, he himself should not oppress in turn because *"Verily, Allāh does not like the oppressors."*

"There will be no blame on the one who takes revenge after he has been wronged." When, within limits, a person takes revenge for a wrong done to him, he cannot be condemned because he merely exercised his right. If the aggressor or the aggressor's family wish to retaliate, they will be guilty of oppression. Concerning them, Allāh says, *"There will be blame only on those who oppress people and unjustly rebel on earth. An excruciating punishment shall be the lot of these people."*

Thereafter, Allāh proclaims, *"Whoever exercises patience and pardons, this is certainly among the most resolute matters."* While everybody does not have the capacity to do this, it should be borne in mind that the reward is extremely great. Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیه وسلم that Sayyidina Mūsa علیه السلام once asked Allāh who is most honourable in His sight. Allāh replied, "The person who pardons despite possessing the ability to retaliate." [*"Mishkāt" p. 434*]

وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن وَلِىٍّ مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۗ وَتَرَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَمَّا رَأَوُاْ ٱلْعَذَابَ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ إِلَىٰ مَرَدٍّ مِّن سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَتَرَىٰهُمْ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا خَٰشِعِينَ مِنَ ٱلذُّلِّ

يَنظُرُونَ مِن طَرْفٍ خَفِيٍّ ۗ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ
وَأَهْلِيهِمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ فِى عَذَابٍ مُّقِيمٍ ﴿45﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُم مِّنْ
أَوْلِيَآءَ يَنصُرُونَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن سَبِيلٍ ﴿46﴾

(44) After Allāh, there can be no Protecting Friend for the one whom Allāh sends astray. When they witness the punishment, you will see the oppressors crying, "Is there any road to escape?" (45) You will see them presented to the Fire with their heads lowered in disgrace, looking on with secretive glances. The believers will announce, "The true losers are those who will lose themselves as well as their families on the Day of Judgment. Behold! The oppressors shall suffer an eternal punishment." (46) There shall be no friends for them to assist them against Allāh. There is no road for the one whom Allāh sends astray.

THE DESTRUCTION AND DISGRACE OF THE OPPRESSORS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Allāh says, *"After Allāh, there can be no Protecting Friend for the one whom Allāh sends astray."* i.e. None can guide or help the one whom Allāh deprives of guidance. Allāh then describes the punishment such people will suffer. He says, *"When they witness the punishment, you will notice the oppressors crying, 'Is there any road to escape?'"* They will search for a way to return to the world, claiming that they will be righteous the second time around. However, all their pleas will be ignored.

Describing their plight further, Allāh says, *"You will see them presented to the Fire with their heads lowered in disgrace, looking on with secretive glances. The believers will announce, 'The, true losers are those who will lose themselves as well as their families on the Day of Judgment."* They will be unable to help themselves on the Day of Judgment, and even their family will desert them there. The punishment they will suffer will not be for a short period. *"Behold! The oppressors shall suffer an eternal punishment."*

Allāh adds, *"There shall be no friends for them to assist them against Allāh."* The disbelievers cannot expect any person to reverse Allāh's decree. *"There is no road for the one whom Allāh sends astray."* Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"You shall never find any allies besides Allāh for those whom He sends astray."* [*Surah 18, verse 97*]

ٱسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِرَبِّكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ مَا لَكُم مِّن مَّلْجَإٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ
وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّكِيرٍ ﴿47﴾ فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا۟ فَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ۖ إِنْ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا
ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ۗ وَإِنَّآ إِذَآ أَذَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً فَرِحَ بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ
أَيْدِيهِمْ فَإِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ كَفُورٌ ﴿48﴾ لِّلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ

(47) Respond to (the commands of) your Lord before there comes to you a day from Allāh which cannot be averted. On that day, you will have no sanctuary, nor any protester. (48) So if they turn away, then We have not sent you as a guardian over them. Propagation is your only responsibility. Indeed, when We allow man to taste of Our mercy, he becomes exuberant. However, when an adversity afflicts him because of what his hands have forwarded, man becomes ungrateful. (49) To Allāh belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates whatever he wills. He confers females to whoever He wills, confers males to whoever he wills... (50) .... or He pairs them as male and female. Allāh also makes whoever He wills barren. Indeed, He is the All Knowing, All Powerful.

ACCEPT THE COMMANDS OF YOUR LORD BEFORE JUDGMENT DAY

Allāh exhorts man to *"Respond to (the commands of) your Lord before there comes to you a day from Allāh which cannot be averted. On that day, you will have no sanctuary, nor any protester."* On the Day of Judgment there will be none to protest about the plight of another

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"So if they turn away, then* (do not grieve because) *We have not sent you as a guardian over them. Propagation is your only responsibility."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمwas not charged to make people accept, and will therefore not be questioned about the fact that the disbelievers did not believe.

MAN'S JOY AT GOOD FORTUNE AND INGRATITUDE IN TIMES OF ADVERSITY

"Indeed, when We allow man to taste of Our mercy, he becomes exuberant. However, when an adversity afflicts him because of what his hands have forwarded (i.e. his sins), man becomes ungrateful." i.e. He begins to talk as if he never experienced any fortune before the adversity.

ALLĀH CONFERS CHILDREN AS HE PLEASES

Allāh declares, *"To Allāh belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates whatever he wills. He confers females to whoever He wills, confers males to whoever he wills or He pairs them as male and female. Allāh also makes whoever He wills barren."* Allāh grants only male offspring to some couples, whereas He grants all female children to others. There are also those couples to whom Allāh grants male and female offspring, while others have no children at all. The reproductive act alone does not ensure children. The decision rests with Allāh, Who is *"the All Knowing, All Powerful."* Everything happens according to His perfect wisdom, and none can alter His decrees.

۞ وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُكَلِّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِن وَرَآئِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا
فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِۦ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِىٌّ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ۚ
مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِى مَا ٱلْكِتَٰبُ وَلَا ٱلْإِيمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِن جَعَلْنَٰهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن نَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۚ
وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِىٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ صِرَٰطِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ تَصِيرُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٥٣﴾

(51) It is appropriate for a human that Allāh speaks to him only by means of inspiration, or from behind a veil, or that He sends a messenger who conveys the revelation by Allāh 's command, as He pleases. Verily Allāh is Exalted, the Wise. (52) In this manner did We reveal the Qur'ān to you by Our command. You did not know what was the Book or what was Belief, but We made it a light with which We guide those bondsmen of Ours whom We will. Without doubt, you guide towards the straight path... (53) .... the path of Allāh, to Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and in the earth. Behold! All matters return to Allāh only.

HOW CAN MAN CONVERSE WITH ALLĀH?

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.4 p.132*) reports that the Jews once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "If you are really a Prophet , then why is it that you do not converse with Allāh or see Him like Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام did?" It was in response to this that Allāh revealed the above verse stating that it is only possible for a human being to converse with Allāh in one of three methods. These methods are:

First. *"by means of inspiration" i.e.* by instilling something within a person's heart, or showing him something in a dream.

Second. *"from behind a veil"* like Allāh spoke to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام on Mount Tūr.

Third. *"that He sends a messenger [Jibr'īl* عليه السلام*] who conveys the revelation by Allāh 's command, as He pleases."*

These three methods are necessary because *"Verily Allāh is Exalted, the Wise."* No human has the capability to converse with Allāh directly. Allāh converses with people in one of the above methods, as He deems appropriate in His perfect wisdom.

NOTE 1: The *"inspiration"* that Allāh instils within the hearts of the Prophets عليهم السلام and the dreams that they see are clear commands from Allāh, which have to be practised (Qat'ī). On the other hand, the inspiration (Ilhām) and dreams of other people are regarded as "Dhanni" i.e. they cannot be used as a proof to substantiate any act that is contrary to the Shari'ah.

NOTE 2: The *"veil"* mentioned in the verse refers to a veil of celestial light. A hadith of Muslim states, *"Allāh's veil is celestial light (Nūr). If it is removed, the radiance of His countenance would burn all of His creation as far as He can see."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 21*]

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام spoke to Allāh from behind the veil because (as a human) he was unable to withstand talking to Allāh while looking at Him directly. It is only in Heaven that Allāh will grant man the ability to look at Him directly.

Allāh states further, *"In this manner did We reveal the Qur'ān to you by Our command."* While the Arabic word "Rūh" has been translated above as *"the Qur'ān "*, other commentators are of the opinion that it refers to Prophet hood or revelation. Further addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"You did not know what was the Book or what was Belief...* "i.e. before becoming a Prophet , you were unaware of Allāh's Book, and of the detailed articles of faith. It was only after Allāh made the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a Prophet that the Qur'ān was revealed and he began to receive revelation pertaining to the details of faith. Of course, by then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was already aware of the basic tenets of Belief.

"but We made it (the Qur'ān) a light with which We guide those bondsmen of Ours whom We will. Without doubt, you guide towards the straight path." Allāh then describes that straight path ("Sirātal Mustaqīm") as *"the path of Allāh, to Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and in the earth."* Allāh will be pleased with the person who treads this path of His. Allāh concludes the Surah by reminding man, *"Behold! All matters return to Allāh only."*

سورة الزخرف

Makkan	Surah Az-Zukhruf	Verses 89

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٧﴾

حمٓ ﴿1﴾ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿2﴾ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿3﴾
وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٌ ﴿4﴾ أَفَنَضْرِبُ عَنكُمُ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا
أَن كُنتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّسْرِفِينَ ﴿5﴾ وَكَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن نَّبِيٍّ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿6﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِم
مِّن نَّبِيٍّ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿7﴾ فَأَهْلَكْنَا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُم بَطْشًا وَمَضَىٰ مَثَلُ
الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿8﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful

(1) HāMīm. (2) By the oath of the Clear Book! (3) We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān so that you understand. (4) Verily, in the Mother Book with Us, it is exalted and full of wisdom. (5) Should We take the Reminder away from you completely because you are a transgressing nation? (6) Numerous were the Holy Prophets that We sent among the former nations. (7) They used to ridicule every Prophet that came to them. (8) So We destroyed people who were much more powerful than these people. (Thus) did the example of the ancient men pass.

THE QUR'ĀN IS IN CLEAR ARABIC AND OFFERS ADVICE. THOSE WHO DENIED THE FORMER PROPHETS WERE DESTROYED

Taking an oath by the Qur'ān itself, Allāh says, *"By the oath of the Clear Book! We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān so that you understand* (and be rightly guided)." Since the first addressees of the Qur'ān were the Arabs, the Qur'ān spoke their language. Allāh then describes the noble position of the Qur'ān when He says, *"Verily, in the Mother Book with Us (the "Lowhul Mahfūz"), it* (the Qur'ān) *is exalted and full of wisdom."* Certain commentators have translated the word "Hakīm" (translated above as *'full of wisdom")* as a Book that is free of contradictions.

Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"It is the honourable Qur'ān in the Lowhul Mahfūdh (Protected Tablet)."* The concluding verse of Surah Burūj reads: *"It is the Glorious Qur'ān in the Lowhul Mahfūz."*

"Should We take the Reminder away from you completely because you are a transgressing nation?" This verse tells the disbelievers that they should never think that the revelation of the Qur'ān will cease merely because they refuse to accept it. The revelation continued because it was destined to be a guide for the believers and a proof against the disbelievers.

"Numerous were the Holy Prophets that We sent among the former nations. (However) They used to ridicule every Prophet that came to them. So We destroyed people who were much more powerful than these people (present today). (Thus) did the example of the ancient men pass." Despite their prowess and strength, they were unable to withstand Allāh' s punishment.

This verse is similar in meaning to another verse in which Allāh says, *"Those before them denied. These people do not even reach a tenth of what we gave the former people. However, they (the former nations) falsified, so how was my punishment?"*

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ خَلَقَهُنَّ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٩﴾
ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠﴾
وَٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءًۢ بِقَدَرٍ فَأَنشَرْنَا بِهِۦ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا كَذَٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿١١﴾
وَٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلْأَزْوَٰجَ كُلَّهَا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْفُلْكِ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ لِتَسْتَوُۥا
عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِۦ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا ٱسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِى سَخَّرَ لَنَا
هَٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُۥ مُقْرِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

(9) Undoubtedly, if you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly say, "The Mighty, the All Knowing created them." (10) It is Allāh) Who made the earth into a bedding for you, Who made roads on it for you so that you may be guided... (11) ... and who sends rain from the sky in measure. With this rain We revive dead ground. In this manner will you all be resurrected. (12) (And it is Allāh) Who created all pairs and made ships and animals, which you ride. (13) That you may be seated on their backs, then recall the bounty of your Lord when you mount and say, "Pure is Allāh, Who has subjugated this for us whereas we would never have been able to control it..." (14) "...and our return shall certainly be to our Lord."

THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, AND THE BOUNTY OF SHIPS AND ANIMALS

Allāh describes many of His creative feats in these verses, all of which denote that He is the One and Only Deity, Creator and Sustainer. Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, if you ask them* (the disbelievers) *who created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly* (admit and) *say, 'The Mighty, the All Knowing created them.*

It is Allāh *"Who made the earth into a bedding for you, and made roads on it for*

you so that you may be guided." Utilising the natural paths and passes of the landscape, man is able to guide himself in his travels. Commentators have also interpreted the verse to mean that man is able to perceive Allāh's greatness and grandeur by observing and pondering over the marvellous creation of the earth.

Allāh further says that it is He *"Who sends rain from the sky in measure. With this rain We revive dead ground* (causing it to flourish with vegetation). *In this manner will you all be resurrected."* Just as Allāh is Able to revive arid and barren ground, He is perfectly Capable of raising dead bodies on the Day of Judgment.

Furthermore, it is Allāh *"Who created all pairs and made ships and animals, which you ride."* All man has to do to ride an animal is to mount the animal and nudge it with his heel. Allāh has also taught man to make saddles and carriages, which are mounted on the backs of riding animals so that man can be seated comfortably during his travels.

THE SUPPLICATION FOR TRAVELLING

Allāh has created these animals for man's convenience so *"That you may be seated on their backs, then recall the bounty of your Lord when you mount..."* With his heart and tongue, man should remember Allāh's bounty when riding these animals. Allāh Himself teaches man the supplication to recite when recalling this great favour of His. Allāh advises man to say, *"Pure is Allāh, Who has subjugated this for us whereas we would never have been able to control it. And our return shall certainly be to our Lord."* In this supplication, man expresses his gratitude to Allāh for placing a mighty animal (or machine) at his service. It is therefore necessary that man use this bounty in a manner that is pleasing to Allāh. His attention is also drawn to the fact that he will have to return to Allāh, when he will be required to account for the bounties he enjoyed.

Tirmidhi reports that a riding animal was once brought for Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه. As he placed his foot on the stirrup, he said, *"Bismillāh"*. When he sat on the animal's back, he said, *"Al'hamdu Lillāh"*. Thereafter he recited the verse:

> **[TRANSLATION: *"Pure is Allāh, who has subjugated this for us whereas we would never have been able to control it. And our return shall certainly be to our Lord."]***

He then recited *"Al'hamdu Lillāh"* thrice, followed by *"Allāhu Akbar"* thrice. Thereafter, he recited the Supplication/pray:

> [**TRANSLATION:** "O Allāh! You are Pure. I have certainly oppressed my soul, so forgive me, for none but You can pardon sins.]

After reciting this, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه looked towards the sky and smiled. When the people asked him for the reason for smiling, he replied, "The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did exactly as I have done. When I asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم why he smiled, he said that when a person asks Allāh for forgiveness, Allāh says, 'My servant knows that none can forgive sins besides Me.'" [*"Mishkāt" p. 214*]

The above verse reminds man that if Allāh did not subjugate the animals for

man, he would never have been able to derive benefit from them. Man truly appreciates this subjugation when he loses control of his animal.

وَجَعَلُوا لَهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ جُزْءًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ لَكَفُورٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ أَمِ ٱتَّخَذَ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ بَنَاتٍ وَأَصْفَىٰكُم بِٱلْبَنِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِمَا ضَرَبَ لِلرَّحْمَـٰنِ مَثَلًا ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُۥ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾ أَوَمَن يُنَشَّؤُا۟ فِى ٱلْحِلْيَةِ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْخِصَامِ غَيْرُ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَجَعَلُوا ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبَـٰدُ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ إِنَـٰثًا ۚ أَشَهِدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ ۚ سَتُكْتَبُ شَهَـٰدَتُهُمْ وَيُسْـَٔلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

(15) They have apportioned a share for Allāh from His bondsmen. Man is clearly ungrateful. (16) Or has Allāh chosen daughters from His creation and selected you to have sons? (17) When any of them is given the tidings of that which they ascribe to Rahmān, his face darkens as he suppresses his emotions. (18) (Do they ascribe to Allāh) one who is brought up in jewellery and who cannot make herself clear in disputes? (19) And the angels, who are Allāh's bondsmen, they make into females. Did they witness the creation of the angels? Their testimony will certainly be recorded and they will be questioned.

REFUTING THOSE WHO ASCRIBE CHILDREN TO ALLĀH, HIGHLIGHTING THE FOOLISHNESS OF THOSE WHO CLAIMED THAT THE ANGELS ARE ALLĀH'S DAUGHTERS

Many people believe that Allāh has children, a belief that is popular among the Christians. It is common knowledge that a child is a part of the father. Therefore, attributing a child to Allāh would mean that another being is a part of Allāh, which is impossible. Just as the Christians believe that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is Allāh's son and the Jews believed that Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام was Allāh's son, the belief was popular among the polytheists of Arabia that the angels were Allāh's daughters. Refuting these preposterous beliefs, Allāh declares, *"They have apportioned a share for Allāh from His bondsmen. Man is clearly ungrateful."* Instead of being grateful to Allāh for everything, people are audacious enough to say that He has children. This is a clear expression of ingratitude for the innumerable favours Allāh has bestowed on every person.

Thereafter, Allāh specifically addresses the polytheists who believed that the angels were Allāh's daughters. Allāh asks, *"Or has Allāh chosen daughters from His creation and selected you to have sons?"* While ascribing children to Allāh will be tantamount to ascribing a weakness to Him, it is even worse to ascribe daughters to Him, considering the fact that people regard daughters as a sign of weakness. Allāh says in Surah Najm, *"This is certainly an unjust distribution."* [*Surah 53, verse 22*]

Allāh then describes the extreme dislike that the Arabs had for daughters. Allāh says, *"When any of them is given the tidings of that which they ascribe to*

Rahmān (daughters), *his face darkens as he suppresses his emotions.* (Do they ascribe to Allāh) *one who is brought up in jewellery and who cannot make herself clear in disputes?"*

Allāh asks, *"Did they witness the creation of the angels* (because of which they are able to testify that the angels are female)? *Their testimony will certainly be recorded and they will be questioned."* Everything they say will be included in the record of their deeds and, on the Day of Judgment, they will be required to prove the validity of their claims.

وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ مَا عَبَدْنَاهُم ۗ مَّا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ (20) أَمْ
آتَيْنَاهُمْ كِتَابًا مِّن قَبْلِهِ فَهُم بِهِ مُسْتَمْسِكُونَ (21) بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا
عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّهْتَدُونَ (22) وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ
إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ (23) ۞ قَالَ
أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكُم بِأَهْدَىٰ مِمَّا وَجَدتُّمْ عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِ كَافِرُونَ (24)
فَانتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ ۖ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ (25)

(20) They say, "If Allāh willed, we would not have worshipped them. They have absolutely no justification for this and only speculate. (21) Or have We given them a book before this, onto which they hold fast? (22) They say, "But we found our forefathers following a certain way, and we will be guided in their footsteps." (23) In a like manner, whenever We sent a warner to any town before you, the affluent people of the town said, "We found our forefathers following a certain way, and we will be guided in their footsteps." (24.) The Holy Prophet replied) Even though I have brought to you something that is better guidance than that upon which you found your forefathers?" They replied, "We certainly disbelieve what you bring to us." (25) So We exacted retribution from them. See what was the plight of those who deny!

REFUTING AN IGNORANT STATEMENT OF THE POLYTHEISTS

When the polytheists were advised to forsake polytheism because Allāh had forbidden it, they would insolently say, *"If Allāh willed, we would not have worshipped them* (our gods)." They used this argument to substantiate their vile practices, but have actually no grounds to do so. Allāh says, *"They have absolutely no justification for this and only speculate."*

In making this statement, the polytheists meant to say that if polytheism was truly detestable to Allāh, why does Allāh not forcefully stop them? Therefore, they assume that their actions must be pleasing to Allāh because He is allowing them to continue. The reply to this argument has passed in the commentary of the following verses:

"Soon those who commit polytheism will say, 'If Allāh willed, neither we, nor our forefathers would not have committed polytheism, and we would not have forbidden anything.'" In the same manner those before them had denied until they tasted Our punishment. Say, 'Have you any knowledge that you may disclose for us? You only follow conjecture and speculation." [*Surah An'ām (6), verse 148*]

"The idolaters say, 'If Allāh willed then neither we, nor our forefathers would have worshipped anything besides Him, and we would never have forbidden anything without Him.' Those before them behaved in the same manner. The responsibility of the messengers is only clear propagation." [*Surah Nahl (16), verse 35*]

It should be understood that Allāh has sent man to this world as a test to see whether he will be obedient or not. It is obvious that the test cannot be possible if people were forced to do what Allāh willed. A test would mean that they have to be given a choice to opt either for good or for evil. If Allāh had to force people to do something, it will be pointless to reward or punish them.

"Or have We given them a book before this (Qur'ān), onto which they hold fast?" Allāh did not reveal any divine scripture to the Arabs. They can therefore not prove their beliefs from any reliable source. The only thread they hang on to is the claim to be following their forefathers. Therefore, whenever they are told to forsake their ways, *"They say, 'But we found our forefathers following a certain way, and we will be guided in their footsteps.'"*

Allāh says to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that these types of arguments are nothing new because *"In a like manner, whenever We sent a warner to any town before you, the affluent people of the town said, 'We found our forefathers following a certain way, and we will be guided in their foot steps.'"*

This discussion has passed in the following verses:

"And when it is said to them, 'Follow that which Allāh has revealed,' they say, 'But we wish to follow that upon which we found our forefathers.' What! (Will they follow their forefathers) even though they understood but naught, neither were they rightly guided?" [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 170*]

"When it is told to them, 'Come towards what Allāh has revealed and towards the messenger,' they say, 'What we found our forefathers practising is sufficient for us.' (Will they follow their forefathers) even though their forefathers never understood anything, nor were they rightly guided?" [*Surah Mā'idah (5), verse 104*]

"When it is said to them, 'Follow what Allāh has revealed,' they say, 'We will follow what we found our forefathers upon.' Will they follow their forefathers even though Satan called their forefathers to the punishment of the Blaze?" [*Surah Luqmān (31), verse 21*]

Allāh effectively replies to their argument by saying, *"(Will they follow their forefathers) even though their forefathers never understood anything, nor were they rightly guided?"* and *"Will they follow their forefathers even though Satan called their forefathers to the punishment of the Blaze?"* It is certainly incorrect to follow people who were themselves lost. As Allāh says in another verse, *"Follow the path of the one who turns to Me."*

When the nations of the past refuted the Prophets عليهم السلام because they

wished to follow their forefathers, each of the Prophet عليه السلام said his nation, "(Will you choose to follow your forefathers) *Even though I have brought to you something that is better guidance than that upon which you found your forefathers?"* However, these people arrogantly replied, *"We certainly disbelieve what you bring to us."*

Allāh then says that as a result of their insolence, *"We exacted retribution from them* (by destroying them with punishment). *See what was the plight of those who deny!"*

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّنِى بَرَآءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنِى فَإِنَّهُۥ سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةًۢ بَاقِيَةً فِى عَقِبِهِۦ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ بَلْ مَتَّعْتُ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَءَابَآءَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ وَرَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ وَإِنَّا بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

(26) When Ibrahīm said to his father and to his people, "I exonerate myself from what you people worship..." (27) "Except for the One Who has created me. Undoubtedly, He shall guide me." (28) So he left a lasting word among his progeny so that they may abstain. (29) I have given enjoyment to these people and their forefathers until there came to them the truth and a messenger who expounds (matters) clearly. (30) When the truth came to them they said, "This is magic and we certainly reject it."

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام REJECTS POLYTHEISM AND THE MESSAGE OF TRUTH PREVAILS AMONG HIS PROGENY

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was born among a community of polytheists in Babylon, who worshipped idols as well as the stars. Even his own father was a polytheist. When, despite his efforts, they refused to accept the belief of oneness of Allāh, he declared, *"I exonerate myself from what you people worship, save for the One Who has created me. Undoubtedly, He shall guide me."* Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام declared that he will never worship anyone besides Allāh, his Creator. In this statement he alluded that the people are all foolish not to worship the Being Who created them as well.

Saying this, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام left for Palestine with his wife. The commentary of verses 51 to 70 of Surah Anbiya contains the details of his journey and how he got another wife en route. It was from these two wives that he fathered two sons, Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. It is with regard to the progeny from these two sons that Allāh says, *"So he left a lasting word among his progeny so that they may desist (from polytheism)."*

The *"lasting word"* in the verse refers to the belief in monotheism and exoneration from polytheism, which is also referred to in verses 132 and 133 of Surah Baqarah where Allāh says, *"Ibrahīm and Ya'qūb enjoined their sons therewith*

[i.e. to follow the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام] saying, *'O my sons! Verily Allāh has chosen this religion for you, so die only as Muslims.' Or were you present when death presented itself before Ya'qūb? When he asked his sons, 'What will you worship after me?' They replied, 'We will worship your Deity and the Deity of your forefathers Ibrahīm, Isma'īl and Is'hāq Who is One Deity. We submit to Him only."*

The Quraysh were descendants of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام yet they succumbed to polytheism. It was only after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم preached to them that they eventually forsook polytheism and whole heartedly took to the pure belief of oneness of Allāh.

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"I have given enjoyment to these people and their forefathers until there came to them the truth and a messenger* [Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] *who expounds (matters) clearly."* Allāh says that the apparent reason for the denial of the Quraysh was that they were too engrossed in their worldly riches. As a result of this, *"When the truth came to them they said, 'This is magic and we certainly reject it."*

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾ أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ
رَبِّكَ ۚ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ
دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُم بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا ۗ وَرَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾
وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَٰنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقُفًا
مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَّكِئُونَ
﴿٣٤﴾ وَزُخْرُفًا ۚ وَإِن كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَالْآخِرَةُ عِندَ رَبِّكَ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(31) They say, "Why is this Qur'ān not revealed to a prominent man from one of the two cities?" (32) Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord? We distribute their livelihood among them in this worldly life and elevate the ranks of some of them above others so that they may derive benefit from each other. The mercy of your Lord is better than what they amass. (33) If it were not (for fear) of mankind becoming a single nation (of disbelievers), We would have made roofs of silver for the homes of those who disbelieve in Rahmān, as well as staircases which they can climb. (34) And (We would have made) doors (of silver) for their homes, and couches on which they may recline. (35) And (We would have made these of) gold as well. This is all merely the articles of this worldly life. The Hereafter with your Lord is for those with Piety.

THE POLYTHEISTS WANTED THE PROPHET TO BE FROM AMONG THE AFFLUENT MEN OF MAKKAH OR TĀ'IF

People generally regard the wealthy as being prominent, irrespective of the

fact that they may be tyrants, extortionists, usurers or thieves. If one has to question the people of any town about whom they regard as the most prominent person, they will always point to someone who is among the affluent. None will point to a pious man or a person with Islāmic knowledge. This is generally the mentality of people, which is common throughout the ages. Although friend and foe bore testimony to the noble character and personality of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the polytheists objected to his Prophet hood on the grounds of his financial status.

Consequently, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم preached to them, the polytheists said, *"Why is this Qur'ān not revealed to a prominent man from one of the two cities* (Makkah or Tā'if)?" The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes that the polytheists referred to Walīd bin Mughiera from Makkah and Urwa bin Mas'ūd Thaqafi from Tā'if. Both these men were prominent in worldly terms.

Refuting this statement, Allāh says, *"Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord?"* i.e. What right have they to stipulate who should be a Prophet? What authority over appointment of Prophets عليهم السلام do they have? The right to appoint Prophets عليهم السلام rests exclusively with Allāh. Allāh will appoint whoever He wills as Prophets عليهم السلام, and Allāh does not use worldly wealth and position as criteria. Allāh declares in Surah An'ām, *"Allāh best knows where (with whom) He wishes to place His message"* [*Surah 6, verse* 124]

Allāh states further, *"We distribute their livelihood among them in this worldly life and elevate the ranks of some of them above others so that they may derive benefit from each other."* If everyone was to be wealthy, none will need to work and serve another. As a result, the system of the world would collapse. Since some people are wealthy and others are not, the poor depend on the wealthy for employment, while the rich rely just as much on the poor to have their work done. Therefore, the distribution of sustenance is Allāh's choice. If Allāh did not entrust this responsibility to man, how could He entrust the appointment of the Holy Prophet s (which is a much greater task) to man?

"The mercy of your Lord is better than what they amass." This verse makes it clear that Allāh's mercy, which assumes the form of Heaven and its bounties, is much better than all the wealth that people amass in the world.

Allāh then describes the deplorable nature of the world by stating that He can easily shower the beauties of the world onto people whom He detests (the disbelievers). Allāh says, *"If it were not (for fear) of mankind becoming a single nation (of disbelievers), We would have made roofs of silver (or gold) for the homes of those who disbelieve in Rahmān, as well as staircases which they can climb. And (We would have made) doors (of silver and gold) for their homes, and couches on which they may recline. And (We would have made these of) gold as well."* Since man's nature attracts him to the material things of this world, people would become disbelievers so that they can also stand a chance of attaining material gain. It is because of this that Allāh does not grant all the wealth to the disbelievers, but also confers a large portion to the Muslims. At the same time, Allāh also makes many disbelievers poor.

The fact is that Allāh despises this world and all its contents. Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمwas once passing by the carcass of a lamb, the ears of which were also cut. Pointing towards the carcass,

the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم if any of them was prepared to purchase the decaying carcass for the price of one Dirham. The Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم indicated that they were not even prepared to take it for free. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told them, "By Allāh! Allāh despises the entire world more than you people despise this dead lamb." [*Muslim*]

Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If the world was even worth the value of a mosquito's wing to Allāh, He would never have granted a disbeliever even a sip of water to drink." This means that if the world had even as much value as the wing of a mosquito, it would be too valuable to give even a small portion of it (a sip of water) to a person who rejects his Creator. It is common knowledge that Allāh has given the disbelievers much more than a mere sip of water, which means that the world is much more worthless than a mosquito's wing.

Sayyidina Shaddād رضى الله عنه reports that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "O people! Without doubt, this world is a mere article in front of every person, from which good and evil people eat. Indeed, the promise of the Hereafter is a reality, where that King will pass judgement, Who is Just and Omnipotent. He will establish the Truth and obliterate falsehood. Become the sons of the Hereafter and not the sons of this world because the children of every mother run behind her." [*"Mishkāt" p. 445*]

After making mention of the adornments of the world, Allāh declares, *"This is all merely the* (abased and short-lived) *articles of this worldly life. The Hereafter with your Lord is for those with Piety."* Those who adopt Piety will enjoy the everlasting bounties of the Hereafter.

وَمَن يَعْشُ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُۥ شَيْطَٰنًا فَهُوَ لَهُۥ قَرِينٌ (36) وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ
عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ (37) حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَنَا قَالَ يَٰلَيْتَ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكَ
بُعْدَ ٱلْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَبِئْسَ ٱلْقَرِينُ (38) وَلَن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِذ ظَّلَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ فِى
ٱلْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ (39) أَفَأَنتَ تُسْمِعُ ٱلصُّمَّ أَوْ تَهْدِى ٱلْعُمْىَ وَمَن كَانَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ
مُّبِينٍ (40) فَإِمَّا نَذْهَبَنَّ بِكَ فَإِنَّا مِنْهُم مُّنتَقِمُونَ (41) أَوْ نُرِيَنَّكَ ٱلَّذِى وَعَدْنَٰهُمْ
فَإِنَّا عَلَيْهِم مُّقْتَدِرُونَ (42) فَٱسْتَمْسِكْ بِٱلَّذِىٓ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ (43)
وَإِنَّهُۥ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ ۖ وَسَوْفَ تُسْـَٔلُونَ (44) وَسْـَٔلْ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رُّسُلِنَآ
أَجَعَلْنَا مِن دُونِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ءَالِهَةً يُعْبَدُونَ (45)

(36) We shall appoint a Satan to every person who turns a blind eye to Rahmān's advice, who will be his companion. (37) Indeed, they will forbid people from the path, while the people think that they are rightly guided. (38) Until, when the

time arrives when they come to Us and say, "O dear! If only there was the distance of the East and West between yourself and Me.' A terrible companion you were indeed!" (39) "Since you were oppressive people, the fact that you all share the punishment shall be of no benefit to you. (40) Can you make the deaf hear, guide the blind and those who are in manifest deviation? (41) If We have to take you away, We shall still exact retribution from them. (42) Otherwise, We can show you what We have promised them, for We certainly have control over them. (43) So hold fast to the revelation We have sent to you. You are definitely upon the straight path. (44) This is certainly a Reminder to you and to your people. Soon, they shall be questioned. (45) Inquire from those messengers of Ours whom We have sent before you. Besides Rahmān, have We introduced another deity who can be worshipped?

A SATAN IS APPOINTED TO EVERY PERSON WHO TURNS A BLIND EYE TO ALLĀH'S ADVICE, WHO WILL BE USELESS TO HIM ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

The Arabic word "ya'shu" (translated above as "*turns a blind eye* ") refers to a condition when a person cannot see despite not suffering from any ailment. The verse therefore refers to people whom the Qur'ān has reached, and who have even understood the Qur'ān. However, they behave obstinately and refuse to accept it as the truth. At this stage, Allāh delegates a Satan to be their constant companion who instigates them to reject the truth. While they are constantly being misled, these people are under the impression that they are rightly guided.

The Satan referred to in this verse is not the same Satan that is mentioned in the hadith where the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Every one of you has a companion from among the angels and a companion from among the Satans." [*Muslim*]

Although the person and the Satan were closely attached to each other in the world, the person will curse the Satan on the Day of Judgment, saying, "*O dear! If only there was the distance of the East and West between yourself and Me! A terrible companion you were indeed* (because you made evil seem good to me, causing me to sin)!"

A verse of Surah HāMīm Sajdah reads, "*We have delegated companions for them, who beautify for them whatever is before them and whatever is behind them.*" [*Surah 41, verse 25*]

Allāh says further that the people of Hell will be told, "*Since you people were oppressive, the fact that you all share the punishment shall be of no benefit to you.*" When a person suffers any adversity or punishment in this world, he is consoled by the knowledge that he is not suffering alone. If there are others suffering the same plight, the intensity of the hardship is considerably reduced. However, even though many people will be suffering in Hell, this knowledge will have no impact upon the individual suffering of each person. This is so because of the severity of Hell.

Despite realising that Islām is the true religion, there are many people who are under the misconception that should they ever suffer punishment, the punishment will not be so intense because there are millions of others who will

join them there. Besides being mistaken, these people are also extremely foolish to subject themselves to eternal punishment in the feeble hope that the suffering of others will reduce their own suffering.

There are many so-called Muslims who when reminded of fulfilling the Farā'idh (*obligations*) and abstaining from sin, say, "Who else is following the Shari'ah that we follow?" By presenting this foolish reply, these people feel good about including themselves among the sinners. What reply will they have to offer Allāh on the Day of Judgment when they stand in the file of the sinners and face punishment? Will they then be able to say that it matters not because there are thousands of others who will face their plight?

"Can you make the deaf hear, guide the blind and those who are in manifest deviation?" This verse tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he will be unable to guide people who obstinately refuse to lend an ear or who turn a blind eye and choose rather to adhere to their erroneous ways. The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم task was only to propagate the message to people, irrespective of whether they listen or not. He was not charged with forcing them to believe.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"If We have to take you away* (from this world or from Makkah, the disbelievers will not be able to escape Our punishment because), *We shall still exact retribution from them. Otherwise* (if We do not take you away), *We can* (still) *show you what (punishment) We have promised them, for We certainly have control over them."* Certain commentators have mentioned that the *"retribution"* mentioned in the verse refers to the loss of 70 polytheists lives in the Battle of Badr, as well as others 70 being taken captive.

"So hold fast to the revelation (Qur'ān) We have sent to you. You are definitely upon the straight path." This verse tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should forge ahead with propagation even though the disbelievers refuse to respond.

"This (Qur'ān) *is certainly a Reminder to you and to your people."* Allāh is the King of all kings and the Owner of all kingdoms. It is therefore a great honour for a person to be addressed by Allāh. Through the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh addresses the Ummah *(followers)* as well, which is an honour for them also. It is also an honour for the Arabs that Allāh revealed the Qur'ān in their language. While many did not appreciate this bounty, there were those chosen people who did.

Today, every chain of Qur'ānic recitation trails back to the Sahābah (*Companions*) رضى الله عنهم. It is by virtue of the Qur'ān that the Arabic language received importance in the world. To teach the meaning and interpretations of the Qur'ān, volumes have been written about the Arabic language and Arabic rhetoric. The Qur'ān elevated the rank of the Arabs themselves who were downtrodden before the advent of Islām. Before Islām, the Persians ruled Yemen, the Romans ruled Shām (north and north-west Arabia), while the Jews ruled over Madinah. The Arabs had therefore little authority over their region.

"...and to your people." Some commentators have mentioned that this phrase refers to the Quraysh because the Qur'ān was revealed in their dialect. Other

commentators are of the opinion that it refers to all the Arabic-speaking people. These two interpretations will apply when the word "Dhikr" (translated above as *"a Reminder")* is translated as *"an honour"* or *"a pride"*. However, if the word is translated as *"a Reminder"* or *"an Advice"*, then *"your people"* will refer to all believers.

"Soon, they shall be questioned." They will be asked whether they fulfilled the rights of the Qur'ān, whether they practised its injunctions, and whether they appreciated it.

Allāh says thereafter, *"Inquire from those messengers of Ours whom We have sent before you."* Although the verse seems to be addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is actually addressed to the Jews, Christians and the polytheists. They are exhorted to pose a question to the former Prophets عليهم السلام. The question is: *"Besides Rahmān, have We introduced another deity who can be worshipped?"* The reply to this question, which may be sought in the scriptures of the Torah and Injīl, will make it clear that none of the Prophets عليهم السلام ever taught polytheism to his people. Many commentators state that the verse poses this question to those religious scholars who study the Torah and Injīl (Bible).

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَقَالَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿46﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُم بِآيَاتِنَا إِذَا هُم مِّنْهَا يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿47﴾ وَمَا نُرِيهِم مِّنْ آيَةٍ إِلَّا هِيَ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أُخْتِهَا ۖ وَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِالْعَذَابِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿48﴾ وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَ السَّاحِرُ ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِندَكَ إِنَّنَا لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿49﴾ فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابَ إِذَا هُمْ يَنكُثُونَ ﴿50﴾ وَنَادَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَهَٰذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِي ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿51﴾ أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَٰذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ ﴿52﴾ فَلَوْلَا أُلْقِيَ عَلَيْهِ أَسْوِرَةٌ مِّن ذَهَبٍ أَوْ جَاءَ مَعَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مُقْتَرِنِينَ ﴿53﴾ فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَأَطَاعُوهُ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿54﴾ فَلَمَّا آسَفُونَا انتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿55﴾ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَفًا وَمَثَلًا لِّلْآخِرِينَ ﴿56﴾

(46) Undoubtedly, We sent Mūsa with Our signs to Phara'oh (Fir'aun) and his ministers. He said, "I am the messenger of the Lord of the universe. (47) When he came to them with Our signs, they began to laugh at them. (48) Every sign We showed them was greater than the other. We afflicted them with punishment so that they turn back. (49) They said, "O magician! On our behalf, supplicate to your Lord for the covenant He has made with you. Then we will surely be rightly guided." (50) When We removed the punishment from them, they

instantly broke their promise. (51) Phara'oh (Fir'aun) called his people saying, "Does not the land of Egypt and these rivers flowing beneath me belong to me? Do you not see?" (52) "Am I not better than this person who is ignoble and can hardly express himself?" (53) "Why are bangles of gold not thrown to him, or why do angels not appear in successive groups with him?" (54) So Phara'oh (Fir'aun) made fools of his people and they followed him. They were a sinful nation indeed. (55) When they infuriated Us We exacted retribution from them and drowned them all. (56) Thus We made them forebears and an example for those to come after them.

PHARA'OH *(FIR'AUN)* AND HIS MINISTERS SCOFF AT SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام WHEN HE SHOWS THEM THE MIRACLES

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام cast his staff down and it became a serpent, Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and his chieftains laughed, saying that it was not a miracle but an act of magic. They then arranged a contest between Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and the magicians of the country. The magicians were first to cast down their staffs and strings, thereby mesmerising the people into believing that these had become snakes. When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام cast down his staff, the serpent it turned into devoured the snakes of the magicians. The magicians conceded defeat and submitted to Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام religion. The details of this incident have been given in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 109-126*], Surah TāHā [*Surah 20, verses 57-73*] and Surah Shu'arā *[Surah 26, verses 33-5 1]*.

The magicians could not compete with Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام miracle of the shining hand because it was beyond their capabilities. Besides these two miracles, there were numerous others, which served as punishment for phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and the Egyptians. Reference to this is made in Surah A'rāf, where Allāh says, *"So We sent to them the flood, the locusts, the ticks, the frogs and the blood as detailed signs. But they were an arrogant and sinful nation."* [*Surah 7, verse 133*]

Allāh says, *"Every sign* (punishment) *We showed them was greater* (more potent) *than the other. We afflicted them with punishment so that they turn back."* When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told them that the miracles were a punishment for them, they even scoffed at this, saying that they still deem them to be acts of magic. He also told them that the punishment could be alleviated if they accepted his teachings. However, despite realising that they will be saved by his intercession, they still called him a wizard saying, *"O magician! On our behalf supplicate to your Lord for the covenant He has made with you. Then we will surely be rightly guided* (and accept your creed. However,) *When We removed the punishment from them, they instantly broke their promise."* Whenever a punishment was alleviated, they still adhered to their former ways of rejection.

Fearing that he might lose his kingdom to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"Phara'oh (Fir'aun) called his people saying, 'Does not the land of Egypt and these rivers flowing beneath me belong to me? Do you not see? Am I not better than this person who is ignoble and can hardly express himself?'"* In this manner, he expressed his material superiority over Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. He told his people that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was a poor man who belonged to a nation who were

their slaves. Indoctrinated by phara'oh *(Fir'aun)*, the people also said, "Should we believe in two humans like ourselves whereas their people are our slaves?" It was with reference to the stutter that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام had that phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* said that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام *"can hardly express himself?"*

Another objection that phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* raised was: "Why are bangles of gold not thrown to him, or why do angels not appear in successive groups with him?" i.e. If he is a true Prophet of Allāh, why does he not have wealth or an army of angels to support him? The people of every nation look up to their chieftains and ape whatever their chieftains do. The chieftains during the time of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام agreed to everything that phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* told them. Eventually solidarity was achieved when the chieftains indoctrinated the masses with the same ideas.

Allāh says, *"So phara'oh (Fir'aun) made fools of his people and they followed him. They were a sinful nation indeed."*

"When they infuriated Us (by denying Our messengers and signs) We exacted retribution from them and drowned them all. Thus, We made them forebears and an example for those to come after them." The people coming after them were to learn a lesson from the behaviour of their forebears and not tread in their misguided footsteps.

۞ وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ (57) وَقَالُوٓا۟ ءَأَٰلِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ ۚ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًۢا ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ (58) إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ (59) وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنكُم مَّلَٰٓئِكَةً فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَخْلُفُونَ (60) وَإِنَّهُۥ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا وَٱتَّبِعُونِ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ (61) وَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ (62) وَلَمَّا جَآءَ عِيسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَلِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُم بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ (63) إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّى وَرَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ (64) فَٱخْتَلَفَ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ مِنۢ بَيْنِهِمْ ۖ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ (65) هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا ٱلسَّاعَةَ أَن تَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ (66)

(57) When the peculiar example of the son of Maryam is cited your people suddenly start shouting. (58) They say, "Are our gods better or he?" They say this to you only to dispute, for they are a people given to arguing. (59) He [Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام] is but a slave upon whom We have bestowed Our bounties, and whom We have made an example for the Bani Isrā'īl. (60) If We will, We could have created angels among you on earth, who would appear in

succession. (61) And he will certainly be a sign of Judgment day, so never doubt it, and follow me. This is the straight path. (62) Never let Satan stop you, for he is certainly your open enemy. (63) When Isā عليه السلام came with the clear signs, he said, "I have come to you with wisdom and to make clear to you the matters about which you differ. So fear Allāh and follow me." (64) "Allāh is definitely my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him only. This is the straight path." (65) However the parties differed between themselves. May the oppressors suffer the destruction of a painful day's punishment! (66) They are waiting only for Judgment day to come to them suddenly without them realising.

REFUTING THE FOOLISH STATEMENT OF THE QURAYSH AND AN INTRODUCTION TO SAYYIDINA ISA عليه السلام

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه reports that the Quraysh once told Abdullāh bin Zab'ari (who was then not yet a Muslim) that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recites the verse: *"You and whatever you worship besides Allāh will be the fuel of Hell."* Upon hearing this, Abdullāh bin Zab'ari said, "If I was present, I would have refuted this." When the Quraysh asked for an explanation, he replied, "I say that the Christians worship Masīh [Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام] and the Jews worship Uzair عليه السلام. So will these two persons also be fuel for Hell?" The Quraysh became jubilant over this reply and they started shouting. The reply to this objection has passed in Surah Anbiya, where Allāh says, *'indeed those for whom We have ordained the best, these shall be kept far from Hell. They will not even hear its whisper."* [*Surah 21, verses 101/2*]

Another narration states that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told the Quraysh, "There is no good in anything that is worshipped besides Allāh." The Quraysh retorted, "Did you not say that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was Allāh's messenger and a pious man? According to what you have said, he also deserves to go to Hell because some people worship him." They also said, "If all gods besides Allāh are destined for Hell, we are happy that our gods will be with Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, Uzair عليه السلام and the angels." (So that they could also share in the bounties that these two Prophets عليهم السلام would receive).

The only intention of the polytheists was to wrangle and dispute. They had no concern for recognising the truth. Otherwise, anyone will understand that Allāh's chosen servants cannot be made to suffer punishment because of the polytheism that others commit. In the light of the above, it will now be easy to understand the verses in context. Allāh says, *"When the peculiar example of the son of Maryam is cited your people suddenly start shouting."* i.e. When it is said that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام will be with the idols of the polytheists, they shout with joy and say, *'Are our gods better or he* [*Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام*]?"

By asking this question, they implied that since Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is Allāh' s chosen servant and will be honoured in the Hereafter, their gods also deserve the same because they are worshipped like Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is. Allāh says further, *"They say this to you only to dispute, for they are a people given to arguing."* They are such that they will always dispute with the truth.

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"People who go astray after guidance has come to them are a people given to*

arguing." Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"They say this to you only to dispute, for they are a people given to arguing."* [*Tirmidhi*]

"He [Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام] is but a slave upon whom We have bestowed Our bounties..." Allāh blessed Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام with the great bounty of Prophet hood. No Prophet of Allāh ever called people to worship him or any other being besides Allāh. It is because of people's own foolishness that they succumb to the practices of polytheism. It will therefore be inappropriate for Allāh's pious servants to suffer punishment because of the polytheism that people commit. Those who perpetrate the vile act of polytheism will be punished for their sin. They will burn in Hell along with their idols.

Speaking further about Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"whom We have made an example for the Bani Isrā'īl."* Allāh showed the Bani Isrā' īl that He has the power to create a child without the agency of a father.

"If We will, We could have created angels among you on earth, who would appear in succession." The first interpretation of this verse is literal meaning that Allāh could well create angels on earth, who would live and die like ordinary human beings. Another interpretation is that Allāh could have settled angels on earth. Wherever they may be, Allāh's creation will remain His creation and can never be considered worthy of worship. The fact that the angels live in the heavens does not qualify them to be gods, neither can they be called Allāh' s daughters.

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.4 p. 143*) has interpreted the verse to mean that Allāh can easily destroy man and replace him with angels as vicegerents on earth. Unlike man, these angels will devote themselves to Allāh's worship.

"And he will certainly be a sign of Judgment day......." The following three interpretations of this verse have been mentioned:

- "he" refers to Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, whose return to this world from the heavens will be sign to indicate that Judgment day is very close.
- "he" may be interpreted as "it", which will refer to the Qur'ān. Therefore, the revelation of the Qur'ān is itself a sign to indicate that Judgment day is near. Holding up his index and middle fingers, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Judgment day and he were as close as these two fingers.
- "he" may be interpreted as "it", which will refer to the miracles of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. The people who saw Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام raising the dead from their graves could easily be convinced of resurrection on the Day of Judgment.

Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell the people, *"so never doubt it (Judgment day), and follow me. This is the straight path. Never let Satan stop you, for he is certainly your open enemy."*

"When Isā came with the clear signs, he said, 'I have come to you with wisdom

(Prophet hood and the Injīl) and to make clear to you the matters about which you differ."' Part of his message entailed clarifying the injunctions of religion and setting right the contamination that the Bani Isrā'īl had introduced into the Torah. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

Addressing the Bani Isrā'īl further, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام said, *"So fear Allāh and follow me. Allāh is definitely my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him only. This is the straight path."* Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام performed the amazing miracles of raising the dead and blowing life into birds modelled from clay. Since such extraordinary feats could mislead the Christians into regarding him as Allāh, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام clarified that Allāh is his Lord as well.

"However the parties differed between themselves." The Christians fragmented into many denominations. While some of them regarded Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام as Allāh Himself, others believe that he is Allāh's son . There are also those who believe in Trinity, and consider Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام to be one of three inseparable deities. Those Christians who do not subscribe to any of these three beliefs are also guilty of disbelief because they deny the Prophet hood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Of course, there will always be those from among them whom Allāh guides to Islām, like Najāshi the king of Abysinnia.

Allāh continues, 'May the oppressors suffer the destruction of a painful day's punishment! They are waiting only for Judgment day to come to them suddenly without them realising." Certain commentators have mentioned that the pronoun *"They"* refers to those Christians who split into various denominations after Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was raised to the heavens. They adamantly denied the truth despite recognising it as such. This behaviour resembles that if a person who is prepared to believe in Judgment day only when he sees it happen before him. Of course, it will then be too late.

Other commentators have mentioned that the word *"They"* refers to the Quraysh of Makkah who denied the occurrence of Judgment day. Because they do not believe it, they would not even realise that Judgment day is taking place when it does. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the verse depicts the foolishness of the polytheists, who are of the opinion that Judgment day will be good for them. However, when Judgment day does take place, they will have to face the harsh reality that it spells their destruction.

ٱلْأَخِلَّآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿67﴾ يَـٰعِبَادِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ وَلَآ أَنتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ﴿68﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا وَكَانُوا۟ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿69﴾ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْجَنَّةَ أَنتُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ ﴿70﴾ يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِصِحَافٍ مِّن ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ ۖ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ ٱلْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ ٱلْأَعْيُنُ ۖ وَأَنتُمْ فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ ﴿71﴾ وَتِلْكَ ٱلْجَنَّةُ ٱلَّتِىٓ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿72﴾ لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَـٰكِهَةٌ كَثِيرَةٌ مِّنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿73﴾

(67) Friends will be enemies on that day, except for those with Piety. (68) "O My bondsmen! You shall have no fear today, neither will you grieve." (69) Those who believe in Our verses and were obedient." (70) "You and your spouses should enter into Heaven jubilantly." (71) Bowls and cups of gold will be passed around and in Heaven there shall be whatever the heart desires and whatever pleases the eye. You will abide there forever." (72) This is Heaven, which you have been made to inherit because of the deeds you carried out. (73) And you will have an abundance of fruit to eat in Heaven.

FRIENDS WILL BE ENEMIES ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT AND THE RIGHTEOUS WILL HAVE EVERYTHING THAT PLEASES THEM IN HEAVEN

Describing the terror of the Day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"Friends will be enemies on that day, except for those with Piety."* As mentioned in many previous verses, people on the Day of Judgment will curse their companions for leading them astray and for not allowing them to accept Islām. However, those people who avoided polytheism will remain friends on the Day of Judgment, and they will even intercede on behalf of each other.

On the Day of Judgment, Allāh will declare His favour on the righteous believers saying, *"O My bondsmen! You shall have no fear today, neither will you grieve..."* Describing these bondsmen, Allāh says that they are *"Those who believe in Our verses and were obedient."* They will then be told, *"You and your spouses should enter into Heaven jubilantly."* Allāh then mentions one of the bounties that people will enjoy in Heaven when He says, *"Bowls and cups of gold will be passed around..."* Youthful servants will serve food and drinks to the people of Heaven.

Allāh then encapsulates all the bounties of Heaven when He says, *in Heaven there shall be whatever the heart desires and whatever pleases the eye."* Irrespective of how wealthy a person may be in this world, he can never have whatever he desires. There are still things that may be too expensive for him, or which he cannot purchase. Even if the item can be purchased, there are times when he will be unable to enjoy it because of various reasons - ill health being a major reason. Even if a person is in the process of realising his desires in this world, he may never live long enough to witness the culmination.

The above verse makes mention of gold utensils, while a verse of Surah Dahar also speaks about silver utensils. One cannot compare the gold and silver of Heaven to that of this world, which has to be purified and smelted. It is not permissible for Muslim men and women to eat or drink from utensils made of gold or silver.

Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضی الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Do not eat or drink from utensils of gold and silver." He also said, "The person who eats or drinks from gold or silver utensils is filling his belly with the fire of Hell."

Sayyidina Hudhaifah رضی الله عنه reports that Muslims may not eat or drink from gold and silver utensils because these are meant for the disbelievers in this world and for the Muslims in the Hereafter. Allāh also says that Heaven will contain *"whatever pleases the eye."* This means that nothing in Heaven will

be unpleasant to look at. Everything a person looks at will be source of pleasure for him. He will also not be prohibited from looking at anything there. The concept of an "evil glance" will be non-existent there. To crown it all, these pleasures will never end because the people of Heaven will be told, *"You will abide there forever."*

In commemoration of the good deeds people do, they will be told, *"This is Heaven, which you have been made to inherit because of the deeds you carried out and you will gave an abundance of fruit to eat in Heaven."*

إِنَّ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ فِى عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ لَا يُفَتَّرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَمَا ظَلَمْنَٰهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوا۟ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَنَادَوْا۟ يَٰمَٰلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُم مَّٰكِثُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ لَقَدْ جِئْنَٰكُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ أَمْ أَبْرَمُوٓا۟ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ أَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَىٰهُم بَلَىٰ وَرُسُلُنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

(74) Verily, the criminals shall suffer the punishment of Hell forever. (75) The punishment shall not be lessened for them, and they will lose all hope there. (76) We did not oppressed them, but they were oppressors themselves. (77) They will call out, "O Mālik! Your Lord should settle our matter." He will reply, "You people will certainly have to remain (here)." (78) We definitely brought the truth to you, but most of you disliked the truth. (79) Or have they devised a resolute plot? Indeed, We are also plotting. (80) Or do they think that We do not hear their secrets and their stealthy meetings? Most certainly We do, and Our scribes are with them, writing.

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL SUFFER FOREVER IN HELL, WHERE THEIR PUNISHMENT WILL NOT BE LESSENED

After mentioning the bounties that the people of belief will enjoy, Allāh now begins to discuss the plight of the disbelievers. Allāh says, *"Verily, the criminals shall suffer the punishment of Hell forever. The punishment shall not be lessened for them, and they will lose all hope (of salvation) there."* Another interpretation of losing hope is that they will be in perpetual sorrow because of the severity of Hell.

"We never oppressed them, but they were oppressors themselves." When the truth came to them in the world, they refused to accept it, thereby drawing Allāh's punishment to themselves.

Thereafter, Allāh mentions the request that the people of Hell will make to the chief keeper of Hell, who is an angel called Mālik عليه السلام. *"They will call out, 'O Mālik! Your Lord should settle our matter (by taking our lives so that we are saved from punishment).' He will reply, 'You people will certainly have to remain (here).'"* i.e. you will have to remain here forever without emerging and

without dying.

Sayyidina A'mash رحمة الله عليه says that he heard that the period of a thousand years will pass between the request of the people in Hell and the reply of the keeper [*Sayyidina Mālik* رحمة الله عليه].

Tirmidhi reports that the inmates of Hell will consult with each other to make a request before the keepers of Hell. They will ask, *"Supplicate to your Lord to lessen a day of punishment for us."* Thereupon the keepers will reply, *"Did your messengers not come to you with clear signs?"* The people will reply, *"Certainly."* The keepers will then say, *"Then you supplicate. The supplication of the disbelievers is lost."* [*Surah Mu'min (40), verses 49 and 50*]

The inmates of Hell will be told, *"We definitely brought the truth to you, but most of you disliked the truth.* "It was this aversion for the truth that landed these people into Hell. The Quraysh of Makkah detested the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and devised many plots to hinder the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In fact, they even plotted to assassinate him. Allāh says, *"Or have they devised a resolute plot? Indeed, We are also plotting."* Allāh says that the polytheists are foolish to think that they can harm the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمthrough their schemes. Allāh's protection was always with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and therefore their plots could never succeed. Allāh says in Surah Tūr, *"Or are they plotting something? Indeed those who disbelieve will themselves be ensnared in a plot."* [*Surah 52, verse 42*]

Allāh says further, *"Or do they think that We do not hear their secrets and their stealthy meetings? Most certainly We do, and Our scribes are with them, writing."* No secret conspiracies are hidden from Allāh. He is Aware of everything that people do and say, and He will punish them accordingly.

قُلْ إِن كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَابِدِينَ (81) سُبْحَانَ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ (82) فَذَرْهُمْ يَخُوضُوا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ (83) وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَٰهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَٰهٌ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ (84) وَتَبَارَكَ الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَعِندَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (85) وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَن شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ (86) وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ (87) وَقِيلِهِ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ هَٰؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ (88) فَاصْفَحْ عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلَامٌ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ (89)

(81) Say, "If Rahmān had a son, then I would have been the first worshipper." (82) The Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne is Pure from whatever people associate with Him. (83) So leave them to engage in talks and to play until they encounter the day that they have been promised. (84) It is Allāh

Who is the Deity the heavens and the Deity on earth. He is the Wise, the All Knowing. (85) Blessed is that Being to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two. The knowledge of Judgment day is only with Him, and to Him shall you all be returned. (86) Those (gods) that they worship besides Allāh have no power to intercede, except for the one who attests to the truth and those who have knowledge. (87) If you have to ask them who created them, they will definitely say, "Allāh So where are they wandering astray? (88) And (Allāh knows) the statement of the Holy Prophet when he said, O my Lord! This is a nation who refuse to believe. (89) Ignore them and say, "Salām ". They will soon come to know.

ALLĀH'S GREAT QUALITIES AND EXEMPTION FROM POLYTHEISM

This Surah refers to the polytheists who called the angels Allāh's daughters and the Christians who called Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام Allāh's son. In the verse being discussed, Allāh refutes these beliefs by instructing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to say *"If Rahmān had a son, then I would have been the first worshipper."* However, since Allāh has no children, only He should be worshipped. Allāh's disassociation with all partners is then expressed in the verse: *"The Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne is Pure from whatever people associate with Him."*

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"So leave them to engage in (their frivolous) talks and to play until they encounter the day that they have been promised."* In fact, everything in this world is play and sport. Allāh says in Surah Hadīd *"Know that the life of this world is merely play, futility, decoration, boasting among each other and rivalry in wealth and children. The example of this is like rain, the plants of which amaze the farmers. Thereafter it dries and you will see it become yellow, only to be reduced to bits. In the Hereafter there shall be severe punishment, forgiveness and (Allāh's) pleasure. The life of this world is but a commodity of deception."* The disbelievers and polytheists are so engrossed in the futile matters of this world that they completely forget about the Hereafter. According to various commentators, *"the day that they have been promised" refers to:*

- the day of their death,
- the Day of Judgment,
- the Battle of Badr.

"It is Allāh Who is the Deity in the heavens and the Deity on earth. He is the Wise, the All Knowing." No other being is worthy of worship and none possesses the qualities that Allāh possesses.

Allāh continues to say, *"Blessed is that Being to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two. The knowledge of Judgement day is only with Him, and to Him shall you all be returned."* Upon people's return to Allāh they will be justly rewarded or punished.

When the polytheists are censured for worshipping idols, they claim that

they worship Allāh, but pray to the idols only so that the idols may intercede on their behalf before Allāh. This was only an excuse because lifeless objects cannot even speak, let alone intercede. Then too, only those who have permission from Allāh can intercede. Allāh has never commanded them to regard their gods as intercessors, neither has He ever appointed them as intercessors. Allāh's Prophets عليهم السلام preached oneness of Allāh and abstinence from polytheism. Worship of other gods as intercessors was never encouraged. However, the polytheists concocted their own beliefs to support their whims.

On the Day of Judgment, only those people permitted by Allāh will be able to intercede. With reference to this, Allāh says, *"Those (gods) that they worship besides Allāh have no power to intercede, except for the one who attests to the truth and those who have knowledge (only they will be permitted to intercede)."* Allāh says in Āyatul Kursi , *"Who is there to intercede before Him without His permission?"* Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"only the one with whom He is pleased will be able to intercede."* [*Surah 21, verse 28*]

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that *"the one who attests to the truth and those who have knowledge"* also refers to the angels, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام even though they were worshipped. However, they will not want to intercede on behalf of the disbelievers, neither will they ever be permitted to do so.

"If you have to ask them who created them, they will definitely say, 'Allāh'." Despite acknowledging the fact that Allāh is their Creator, the disbelievers still worship other beings. This clearly displays their foolishness. Therefore, Allāh asks, ج

"And (like Allāh has knowledge of Judgment, Allāh also knows) *the statement of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *when he said, 'O my Lord! This is a nation who refuse to believe.* " In response to this statement Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *'ignore them* (i.e. do not expect them to believe) *and say, 'Salām'."* This is not the "Salām" that one greets with, which is actually a supplication for the peace and safety of the person. It is rather a statement to denote parting, which tells the addressee that his company is not desired. Referring to the same type of "Salām", a verse of Surah Qasas reads:

"When they hear futility, they turn away from it saying, 'Our deeds are ours and your deeds are yours. We greet you with peace (Salām). We do not wish to converse with the ignorant." [*Surah 28, verse 55*]

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"They will soon come to know.* " The disbelievers will learn the error of disbelief and polytheism when they are faced with Allāh's punishment in this world or in the Hereafter.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

سورة الدخان

Makkan	Surah Ad-Dukhan	Verses 59

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

حمٓ ﴿١﴾ وَٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلۡمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ فِي لَيۡلَةٖ مُّبَٰرَكَةٍۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ ﴿٣﴾
فِيهَا يُفۡرَقُ كُلُّ أَمۡرٍ حَكِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾ أَمۡرٗا مِّنۡ عِندِنَآۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُرۡسِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾ رَحۡمَةٗ مِّن رَّبِّكَۚ إِنَّهُۥ
هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ﴿٦﴾ رَبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَآۖ إِن كُنتُم مُّوقِنِينَ ﴿٧﴾
لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحۡيِۦ وَيُمِيتُۖ رَبُّكُمۡ وَرَبُّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨﴾ بَلۡ هُمۡ فِي شَكّٖ
يَلۡعَبُونَ ﴿٩﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) HāMīm. (2) By the oath of the Clear Book! (3) We have revealed it on a blessed night. Verily We are the Warners. (4) The decision of every matter of wisdom is passed on this night... (5) ... as a command proceeding from Us. We are certainly the ones who send (Prophets).. (6) ...by way of mercy from Us. He is certainly All Hearing, All Knowing; (7) The Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two. If you will be convinced. (8) There is no Deity besides Him Who gives life and death. He is your Lord and the Lord of your predecessors. (9) However, they are frolicking in their doubts.

THE QUR'ĀN WAS REVEALED ON A BLESSED NIGHT. ALLĀH GIVES LIFE AND DEATH AND IS THE LORD OF ALL MANKIND, PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Allāh says that the Qur'ān was revealed on a *"blessed night"*. The most accurate interpretation of the *"blessed night"* is that it is Laylatul Qadr (The Night of Power). The following two verses support this interpretation:

- *"The month of Ramadhān is the month in which the Qur'ān was revealed as a guide for mankind..."* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 185*]

- *"Verily, We revealed the Qur'ān on Laylatul Qadr."* [*Surah*

Qadr (97), verse 1]

Sayyidina Ikrima رحمة الله عليه [who was a student of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه] is of the opinion that *"a blessed night"* refers to the night of the 15th of Shābān, known as the Night of Barā'ah. In support of this interpretation, a hadith is quoted in which it is mentioned that sustenance and deaths for the forthcoming year are determined. However, this narration is not authentic. There are also no Ahadīth that state that the Qur'ān was revealed on this night.

The question may arise that since the Qur'ān was revealed gradually over a period of 23 years, how can it be said that it was revealed in a single month of Ramadhān, or in a single night of Qadr? Some commentators have mentioned that the revelation of the Qur'ān began on the night of Qadr, during the month of Ramadhān. A more veritable answer to this is that on the night of Qadr the entire Qur'ān was revealed at once from the Lowhul Mahfuz (Protected Tablet), to the sky above the earth. Here it was placed in the Baitul Izzah. It was from this place that it was then gradually taken, through the order of Allāh, by Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم over a period of 23 years.

"Verily We are the Warners." Through the Qur'ān, Allāh warns His bondsmen about the terrible consequences of disbelief and disobedience to Allāh's commands. This encourages man to do good deeds and to shun evil.

"The decision of every matter of wisdom is passed on this night as a command proceeding from Us." The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has translated "kullu amrin Hakīm" (translated above as *"every matter of wisdom"*) as "every ordained/determined matter". He also reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that everything to occur in the forthcoming year is copied from the Lowhul Mahfūz (*Protected tablet*) and detailed to the angels who will facilitate these matters. These matters include sustenance, good, evil, deaths, etc. Even the names of people who will be performing Hajj the following year are recorded.

"We are certainly the ones who send (The Holy Prophet's) by way of mercy from Us. "It is out of Allāh's mercy that He sends the Holy religion Prophets عليهم السلام and books to guide man in this world.

"He is certainly All Hearing, All Knowing, the Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two. If you will be convinced (then understand that Allāh sent the Prophets عليهم السلام *and revealed the divine scriptures). There is no Deity besides Him Who gives life and death. He is your Lord and the Lord of your predecessors. However, they are frolicking in their doubts."* They have no concern for the Hereafter, no concern to ponder over the facts and no concern for their own welfare because they are too engrossed in frivolities.

فَٱرْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي ٱلسَّمَآءُ بِدُخَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿10﴾ يَغْشَى ٱلنَّاسَ هَٰذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿11﴾
رَّبَّنَا ٱكْشِفْ عَنَّا ٱلْعَذَابَ إِنَّا مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿12﴾ أَنَّىٰ لَهُمُ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ وَقَدْ جَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿13﴾
ثُمَّ تَوَلَّوْا۟ عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا۟ مُعَلَّمٌ مَّجْنُونٌ ﴿14﴾ إِنَّا كَاشِفُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابِ قَلِيلًا ۚ إِنَّكُمْ عَآئِدُونَ ﴿15﴾ يَوْمَ

(10) So wait for the day when the sky will issue forth a manifest smoke. (11) ... which will envelope mankind. This is a painful punishment. (12) "O our Lord! Remove this punishment from us and we will surely believe." (13) From where (now) can they have advice when a manifest messenger has already come to them... (14) ....and they turned away from him saying, "He is a trained madman"? (15) We shall alleviate the punishment for a while, but you people will certainly return. (16) The day when We shall seize them with a firm hold. Surely We will exact retribution.

PEOPLE ARE WARNED ABOUT THE DAY WHEN A SMOKE FROM THE SKY WILL ENVELOPE PEOPLE AND ALLĀH'S GRIP WILL BE FIRM

Allāh says, *"So wait for the day when the sky will issue forth a manifest smoke which will envelope mankind. This is a painful punishment."*

Many commentators are of the opinion that this smoke is one of the signs of Judgment day and it will fill the atmosphere between the earth and the sky. As a result of this smoke, the faithful believers will catch a cold, while the disbelievers and sinners will experience great difficulty in breathing. A hadith of Muslim (*v.2 p.392*), which is narrated by Sayyidina Hudhaifah bin Usaid Ghifāri رضى الله عنه, mentions ten signs of Judgment day, among which the smoke is also included. Therefore, this *"smoke"* has not yet appeared. It will only appear close to the Day of Judgment. This is the opinion of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Zaid bin Ali رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Ibn Abi Mulaykah رحمة الله عليه, and many others.

The second opinion is that of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه, which is reported in Bukhari (*v.2 p.714.15*). When someone mentioned to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه that certain people have interpreted *"the day when the sky will issue forth a manifest smoke"* as an occurrence to take place before Judgment day, he became upset. He said, "Whoever has knowledge should comment, while those without knowledge should say, 'Allāh knows best' (because admission of one's ignorance is a part of knowledge). When the Quraysh rejected the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he prayed to Allāh saying, 'O Allāh! Assist me against them by afflicting them with seven years of drought as took place during the time of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام.' Allāh accepted this supplication and a severe drought took its toll on the Quraysh. Matters deteriorated to such an extent that they were forced to eat carrion and bones. They suffered so much hunger that they actually began to see smoke emerging from the sky. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *'Wait for the day when the sky will issue forth a manifest smoke.'* It was then that the Quraysh cried out, *'O our Lord! Remove this punishment from us and we will surely believe."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه continued to recite the verses of Surah Dukhān up to verse 15, ending with the words *"We shall alleviate the punishment for a while, but you people will certainly return* . Thereafter he asked,

"Will the punishment of the Day of Judgment be alleviated?" In this way he proved that the punishment of the *"smoke"* cannot refer to punishment that will occur on the Day of Judgment.

It transpired after this that the Quraysh sent Sayyidina Abu Sufyān (who was then not a Muslim) to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He entreated the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! You encourage the fostering of good family ties. Your people are being destroyed. Please make supplication to Allāh to alleviate this hardship." Consequently, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمsupplicated to Allāh and the rains began to fall. The drought was broken, but the Polytheists still refused to believe, as Allāh says, *"but you people will certainly return (to disbelief)."*

When they refused to believe, Allāh revealed the verse saying, *"The day when We shall seize them with a firm hold. Surely We will exact retribution."* This took place when the polytheists were killed and captured during the Battle of Badr.

The polytheists promised to accept Islām when they prayed, *"O our Lord! Remove this punishment from us and we will surely believe."* Allāh says, *"From where (now) can they have advice when a manifest messenger has already come to them and they turned away from him saying, 'He is a trained madman."* They have already rejected a great personality like the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, whose upright character was renowned and who even showed them miracles. Therefore, it cannot be hoped that they will ever desist merely for fear of punishment.

۞ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَجَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿17﴾ أَنْ أَدُّوٓا۟ إِلَىَّ عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿18﴾ وَأَن لَّا تَعْلُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّىٓ ءَاتِيكُم بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿19﴾ وَإِنِّى عُذْتُ بِرَبِّى وَرَبِّكُمْ أَن تَرْجُمُونِ ﴿20﴾ وَإِن لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوا۟ لِى فَٱعْتَزِلُونِ ﴿21﴾ فَدَعَا رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ قَوْمٌ مُّجْرِمُونَ ﴿22﴾ فَأَسْرِ بِعِبَادِى لَيْلًا إِنَّكُم مُّتَّبَعُونَ ﴿23﴾ وَٱتْرُكِ ٱلْبَحْرَ رَهْوًا ۖ إِنَّهُمْ جُندٌ مُّغْرَقُونَ ﴿24﴾ كَمْ تَرَكُوا۟ مِن جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿25﴾ وَزُرُوعٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿26﴾ وَنَعْمَةٍ كَانُوا۟ فِيهَا فَٰكِهِينَ ﴿27﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَأَوْرَثْنَٰهَا قَوْمًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿28﴾ فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلسَّمَآءُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُنظَرِينَ ﴿29﴾ وَلَقَدْ نَجَّيْنَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ مِنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْمُهِينِ ﴿30﴾ مِن فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَالِيًا مِّنَ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿31﴾ وَلَقَدِ ٱخْتَرْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿32﴾ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ مَا فِيهِ بَلَٰٓؤٌا۟ مُّبِينٌ ﴿33﴾

(17) Before them We have definitely tested the people of phara'oh (Fir'aun), to whom an honourable messenger came... (18) .....(saying to them) "Hand over

Allāh's bondsmen to me. I am a trustworthy messenger to you." (19) "And do not rebel against Allāh. I have come to you with a clear proof." (20) "I seek refuge with my Lord and your Lord that you should stone me." (21) "If you will not believe me, then stay away from me." (22) He then supplicated to his Lord saying, "These people are certainly a sinful nation." (23) (Allāh said), "Leave with my bondsmen by night, you will surely be pursued." (24) "Leave the sea as it is, for they (the people of phara'oh (Fir'aun)) are an army who will be drowned." (25)Plenty were the gardens and springs that they left... (26) .....along with the plantations, palatial homes... (27) .... and articles of pleasure which they enjoyed... (28) .... likewise. We then made others successors to this. (29) Neither the sky nor the earth wept for them, and they were denied reprieve. (30) Undoubtedly We saved the Bani Isrā'īl from a disgraceful punishment... (31) .... of phara'oh (Fir'aun). He was certainly a haughty person from those who transgress. (32) Without doubt We granted superiority to the Bani Isrā'īl over the universe because of their knowledge. (33) And We gave them such signs in which there was clear grace.

A MESSENGER COMES TO THE PEOPLE OF PHARA'OH *(FIR'AUN)* AND THEY ARE DROWNED WHEN THEY REJECT HIM

Allāh says, "*Before them* (i.e. the Quraysh) *We have definitely tested the people of phara'oh (Fir'aun), to whom an honourable messenger* [Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام] *came.*" Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and his people were oppressing the Bani Isrā' īl, enslaving them and torturing them mercilessly. Therefore, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told them "*Hand over Allāh's bondsmen to me.* (I am not merely talking on my own strength because) *I am a trustworthy messenger* (of Allāh) *to you.*" He then warned them, "*And do not rebel against Allāh. I have come to you with a clear proof (miracles).*"

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام continued to preach to the people, Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and his people decided to assassinate him. It was then that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام fearlessly said to them, '*I seek refuge with my Lord and your Lord that you should stone me. If you will not believe me, then* (at least) *stay away from me* (because harassing me would condemn you further and obstruct others from guidance)."

Eventually, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام made supplication to Allāh saying, "*These people are certainly a sinful nation* (so punish them)." Allāh accepted his supplication and decided to punish them. In preparation for the pending punishment, Allāh commanded Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, "*Leave with my bondsmen by night* (for the sea, but remember) *you will surely be pursued* (by Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and his army)."

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام left with the Bani Isrā'īl one night. When Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* received news of this, he mustered a large army and set out in pursuit of the Bani Isrā'īl. Allāh instructed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to strike the ocean with his staff, causing the waters to stop and make several dry paths for them to cross over to the opposite shore. The Bani Isrā'īl managed to cross over calmly and phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* followed with his troops. When the Bani Isrā'īl went across, Allāh closed the paths in the sea, thereby drowning phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and his army. With reference to this, Allāh said to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, "*Leave the sea*

as it is, for they (the people of Fir'oun) are an army who will be drowned."

Like other people who are infatuated with the world, Phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* and his people were also proud of and boastful about their riches. However, they had to leave everything behind when they were drowned. Allāh says about them, *"Plenty were the gardens and springs that they left along with the plantations, palatial homes, and articles of pleasure which they enjoyed likewise. We then made others* (the Bani Isrā'īl) *successors to this."* The explanation of the Bani Isrā'īl becoming successors to the land of Egypt has been given in the commentary of verse 59 of Surah Shu'arā (*Surah 26*) where Allāh says, *"And We made the Bani Isrā'īl successors to them."*

Allāh further says, *"Neither the sky nor the earth wept for them, and they were denied reprieve."* Although they used to receive sustenance from the sky (rain) and the earth, the sky and earth detested these people because Allāh disliked them. Therefore, none was grieved at their deaths.

THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WEEP AT THE DEMISE OF A BELIEVER

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Every believer has two doors in the heavens. His deeds enter through one, while his sustenance descends through the other. When the believer passes away, these two doors weep for him. Allāh refers to (the weeping of) these doors when He says, *'Neither the sky nor the earth wept for them* (the disbelievers), *and they were denied reprieve."* [*Tirmidhi Chapter of the commentary of Surah Dukhān*].

THE FAVOURS BESTOWED ON THE BANI ISRĀ' ĪL

Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly We saved the Bani Isrā'īl from a disgraceful punishment of Phara'oh (Fir'aun). He was certainly a haughty person from those who transgress. Without doubt We granted superiority to the Bani Isrā'īl over the (inhabitants of the) universe (during their period) because of their knowledge."*

In addition to this Allāh *"gave them such signs in which there was clear grace." i.e.* Allāh bestowed such bounties on them, in which Allāh's might and power could be clearly witnessed, e.g. rescuing them from the clutches of phara'oh *(Fir'aun)* who used to slaughter their boys; cleaving the sea open for them so that they could pass safely; sending Manna and Salwa from the heavens as their sustenance and creating numerous Prophets عليهم السلام and kings from their progeny.

إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَيَقُولُونَ ﴿34﴾ إِنْ هِىَ إِلَّا مَوْتَتُنَا ٱلْأُولَىٰ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُنشَرِينَ ﴿35﴾ فَأْتُوا بِـَٔابَآئِنَآ
إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿36﴾ أَهُمْ خَيْرٌ أَمْ قَوْمُ تُبَّعٍ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ أَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿37﴾ وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَٰعِبِينَ ﴿38﴾ مَا خَلَقْنَٰهُمَآ إِلَّا
بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿39﴾ إِنَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْفَصْلِ مِيقَٰتُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿40﴾

يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِى مَوْلًى عَن مَّوْلًى شَيْـًٔا وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ ٱللَّهُ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٤٢﴾

(34) Verily these people say... (35) ... "This is merely our first death and we will not be resurrected." (36) "Bring forth our forefathers if you are truthful." (37) Are they better than the people of Tubba and those before them? We destroyed them all, for they were all sinners. (38) We have not created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two in vain. (39) We have created them with wisdom, but most people do not know. (40) Indeed, the Day of Judgement has been stipulated for all of them. (41) The day when one companion will be of no avail to another, neither shall they be assisted... (42) ... except for those on whom Allāh has mercy. Allāh is undoubtedly the Mighty, the Most Merciful.

THE ARGUMENT OF THOSE WHO DENY JUDGMENT DAY, WHO ARE NO BETTER THAN THE PREVIOUSLY DESTROYED NATIONS

Allāh quotes those who deny the coming of Judgment day, who believe that people die only once and will remain dead corpses until eternity. They said, *"This is merely our first death and we will not be resurrected."* To prove their standpoint, they challenge the believers by saying, *"Bring forth our forefathers if you are truthful* (in saying that people can be resurrected)."

Allāh refutes their argument by stating, *"Are they better than the people of Tubba and those before them? We destroyed them all, for they were all sinners."* The people of *"Tubba"* as well as the powerful nations before them denied the Prophets عليهم السلام who came to them because they regarded themselves as mighty people. However, all their might and authority could not assist them when Allāh's punishment seized them. Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"Those before them denied. These people* (at present) *cannot even reach a tenth of what We gave them* (the previous nations), *yet they falsify My messengers. How will My retribution be?"* [Surah 34, verse *45]*

WHO WERE THE PEOPLE OF "TUBBA"?

Commentators have deliberated at length about who were the people of *"Tubba"*. The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" *(v.4 p.153)* has also penned an extensive treatise on the subject. In short, all commentators are unanimous about the fact that the word *"Tubba"*is a title of the kings of Yemen just as Caesar *(Qaiser)* was a title of Roman emperors and Kisra (Khusro) was the title of Persian kings.

The *"Tubba"* referred to in the above verse was a particular Yemeni king whose name was As'ad bin Malīk and was known as Abu Kurb. Sayyidina Muhammad bin Is'hāq رحمة الله عليه narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that this Tubba was once passing by Madinah when he decided to attack the town. Learning of his intentions, two Rabbi *(Jewish Scholars)* from the Jewish Banu Qurayzah tribe of Madinah approached the Tubba. Their names were Ka'b and Asad. They said to him, "Do not destroy this town. We fear that a fleeting punishment will afflict you if you do not take heed to what we say. This is the place of migration for one of Allāh's Prophets عليهم السلام. He will hail from

the Quraysh, his name will be Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and will be born in Makkah."

Thus saying, they managed to persuade him to change his mind. They then invited him to accept their Dīn (religion), which he eventually did. He later left from Madinah and headed back to Yemen along with the two Rabbis and a few more Jews. On the way to Yemen they passed by the tribe of Banu Hudhail who asked the king whether he wished to learn of a house that was a treasure of pearls, emeralds and silver. When he inquired, they told him that the Ka'ba in Makkah was the place. The Banu Hudhail told him this so that he could be destroyed when attempting to plunder the Ka'ba because they knew that any person who made this attempt was destroyed.

When the Tubba consulted with the two Rabbis, they told him, "The Ka'ba is the only house in our knowledge that is associated with Allāh. You can pray there, make offerings there and shave your hair. These people have advised you in this manner because of the enmity they bear for you." When the Rabbis advised him thus, the Tubba apprehended a few people of the Banu Hudhail and cut off their hands and legs. He also pierced their eyes with hot needles to blind them, after which he crucified them. The Tubba then proceeded to Makkah, where he shrouded the Ka'ba, sacrificed an animal and remained there for a few days. He also made Circumambulation of the Ka'ba and shaved his hair. He then returned for Yemen.

Before entering Yemen, his own tribe, the Bani Himyar confronted him and refused to permit him entry into Yemen because he had forsaken their Dīn (religion) of idolatry. He invited them to accept his Dīn (religion), telling them that his Dīn (religion) was better than theirs. They eventually decided that a fire should arbitrate in their dispute. The fire they ignited consumed all their idols and their adornments, while it receded when it reached the Rabbis . This was the beginning of a rapid spread of Judaism in Yemen. The people of Tubba were therefore believers 700 years before the Prophet hood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and 100 years before that of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها advised people not to speak ill of the people of Tubba because they were good people. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'd رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not speak ill of the people of Tubba because they had become Muslims." [*"Musnad" of Ahmad v.5 p.340*]

In his "Musannaf", Abdur Razzāq رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I do not know whether Tubba was a Prophet or not."

Whereas the above narrations make it clear that the Tubba was a good person, it cannot be determined exactly when his people were destroyed. However, the above verse of Surah Dukhān and verse 14 of Surah Qāf (Surah *50*) make it clear that they were eventually destroyed. It may be said that Allāh's punishment afflicted them when they refused to accept oneness of Allāh on the occasion when the fire was made an arbitrator over them.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that the name of the Tubba in question

was As'ad and he was known as Abu Kuraib. His father was called Malkīku and he ruled for 326 years. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes further that although the Tubba's people accepted oneness of Allāh upon his invitation, they reverted to infidelity after he passed away. They then began to worship idols and fire afterwards, as a result of which Allāh destroyed them, as mentioned in Surah Saba (*Surah 34, verses 15 to 21*). Therefore, according to Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه, the people of Tubba were the people of Saba. [*Tafsīr of Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه, v.4 p. 143/4*]

Thereafter Allāh says, *"We have not created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two in vain. We have created them with wisdom, but most people do not know."* One of the reasons of wisdom behind the creation of the universe is that man may recognise Allāh's power and might. Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"Does the One Who created the heavens and the earth not have the power to create the likes of them? Why not? He is the Prolific Creator, the All Knowing."* [*Surah 36, verse 81*]

NONE SHALL BE ABLE TO ASSIST ANOTHER ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

"Indeed, the Day of Judgement has been stipulated for all of them (whether they believe in it or not. It will be) *the day when one companion will be of no avail to another, neither shall they be assisted, except for those on whom Allāh has mercy."* The effect of Allāh's mercy upon the believers will be that their relationship in this world will be maintained in the Hereafter, where they will intercede on behalf of each other, thereby being of assistance to each other. Allāh is perfectly Capable of exacting retribution from the disbelievers because *"Allāh is undoubtedly the Mighty"*, and He will also shower His mercy upon the believers because He is *"the Most Merciful."*

The Arabic word "moula" (translated above as "*companion* ") is derived from the root word "waliya", which refers to the friendship of two persons. Therefore, each friend will be called the "moula" of the other (and each one may refer to the other as "moulana" i.e. "our friend"). This relationship will be dissolved in the Hereafter, except in respect of those believers upon whom Allāh showers His special mercy. This relationship will be maintained only between the believers. No disbeliever or Muslim will be able to assist any disbeliever at all. Of course, Allāh will permit only certain believers to intercede on behalf of those whom He wills.

إِنَّ شَجَرَتَ ٱلزَّقُّومِ ﴿٤٣﴾ طَعَامُ ٱلْأَثِيمِ ﴿٤٤﴾ كَٱلْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي ٱلْبُطُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾ كَغَلْيِ ٱلْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾ خُذُوهُ فَٱعْتِلُوهُ إِلَىٰ سَوَآءِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٤٧﴾ ثُمَّ صُبُّوا فَوْقَ رَأْسِهِۦ مِنْ عَذَابِ ٱلْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٨﴾ ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْكَرِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَا مَا كُنتُم بِهِۦ تَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

(43) Verily the tree of Zaqqūm... (44) ....shall be food for the sinful. (45) it will be

like the residue of oil and will boil in the bellies... (46) ...just as water boils. (47) "Grab him and drag him to the very midst of the Blazing Fire!" (48) "Then pour the punishment of boiling water over his head." (49) "Taste! You are surely most honourable and esteemed." (50) "This is what you used to doubt."

THE INMATES OF HELL WILL EAT FROM ZAQQŪM AND WILL HAVE BOILING WATER POURED OVER THEM

The previous verses dealt with those who deny Judgment day. The verses under discussion discuss the suffering that will afflict the disbelievers in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"Verily the tree of Zaqqūm shall be food for the sinful."* When the inmates of Hell will experience extreme hunger, one of the foods that will be fed to them will be the tree of Zaqqūm. Allāh says in Surah Sāffāt, *"It is a tree that emerges from the depths of Hell. Its fruit resembles the heads of snakes."* [*Surah 37, verses 64,65*]

The tree will be extremely bitter and its taste will resemble *"the residue of oil"* Despite its contemptible appearance and horrible taste, they will be forced to eat it because of the severe hunger they will suffer. When it will reach their bellies, it *"will boil in the bellies just as water boils."* In addition to this, they will fill their bellies with it, as mentioned in Surah Wāqi'ah [*Surah 56, verse 53*].

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, "If even a drop from the Zaqqūm tree was to be dropped onto the earth, it would contaminate the food of all mankind. So what do you think about the person whose diet it will be?" [*"Targhīb wat Tarhīb" v.4 p.480*]

The angels will be commanded, *"Grab him and drag him to the very midst of the Blazing Fire!"* Besides suffering the tree of Zaqqūm, which will boil in his belly, the inmate of Hell will have boiling water poured over his head. Allāh will command the angels saying, *"Then pour the punishment of boiling water over his head."* Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Boiling water will be poured over their heads. Whatever is in their bellies, as well as their skins will be melted with it."* [*Surah 22, verses 19,20*]

THE RESULT OF ARROGANCE

Although a person may have been a king, a president or any other leading statesman in this world, and may have enjoyed tremendous popularity and esteem, he will suffer the terrible tortures of Hell if he is not a believer. This punishment will leave him in a sordid and miserable condition. He will be reminded of his pomp and glory in this world (which he regarded as his means of success) when he will be told in Hell, *"Taste! You are surely most honourable and esteemed. This is what you used to doubt."* Those of us who love the glamour of this world should take heed.

بِكُلِّ فَٰكِهَةٍ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا ٱلْمَوْتَ إِلَّا ٱلْمَوْتَةَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ وَوَقَىٰهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥٦﴾ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكَ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٥٧﴾

(51) Verily the abstinent ones shall be in a place of peace... (52) ... in gardens and springs. (53) They will wear clothing of fine silk and thick silk, and will be seated facing each other. (54) This is how it will be. We will also marry them to fair, large-eyed damsels. (55) In comfort, they will call for all types of fruit there. (56) They will not taste death there, except for the first death (of this world). Allāh will save them from the punishment of the Blazing Fire... (57) ..... as a favour from your Lord. This is the greatest success.

THOSE WHO ABSTAINED FROM EVIL SHALL ENJOY GARDENS, SPRINGS AND THE CLOTHING AND SPOUSES OF HEAVEN FOREVER

After describing the terrible plight of the people of Hell, Allāh speaks about the bounties to be enjoyed by those who abstained from disbelief and polytheism. These shall be:

First. *Verily the abstinent ones shall be in a place of peace..."* People will have no fear, grief or anxiety in Heaven, neither will they have to worry about leaving the place.

Second. They will abide *"in gardens and springs..."*

Third. *They will wear clothing offline silk and thick silk"*

Fourth. They *"will be seated facing each other."* Commentators mention that will be seated in such a manner that none shall see the nape of the other.

Fifth. *We will also marry them to fair, large-eyed damsels."* The Arabic word *"hūr"* is the plural of "hawrā", which refers to a fair woman who possesses beauty that it appealing to every eye. Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If a damsel of Heaven has to peek into this world, she would illuminate the atmosphere between the sky and the earth and fill it with her fragrance. It is a fact that the scarf on her head is more valuable than the earth and all its contents." [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that each man of Heaven will have at least two wives. Each will be wearing seventy outfits and the marrow in the bones of her legs will be visible from outside. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sixth. *In comfort, they will call for all types of fruit there."*

Seventh. *"They will not taste death there, except for the first death*

(of this world)." After reaching the Hereafter they will have no fear of death any more.

Eighth. *Allāh will save them from the punishment of the Blazing Fire as a favour from your Lord."* Salvation from Hell and entry into Heaven can be attained only by Allāh's grace. It is not compulsory for Allāh to accord this favour on any person. It is purely through His grace that Allāh accepts the belief and deeds of people.

Allāh then declares, *"This is the greatest success."* This sentence reminds man that the material things that he regards as a means of success are in fact useless to him in the Hereafter. He should therefore concentrate his efforts on the Hereafter and make his way to Heaven because this will truly mean success for him.

(58) We have made the Qur'ān easy on your tongue so that they may understand. (59) So wait, for they are waiting as well.

WE HAVE MADE THE QUR'ĀN EASY ON YOUR TONGUE

Surah Dukhān began with mention of the Qur'ān and now concludes on the same note. Allāh says, *"We have made the Qur'ān easy on your tongue so that they may understand."* The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم language was Arabic, so the Qur'ān was also revealed in Arabic so that it could be easy for him as well as for the Arabs who were the first addressees of the Qur'ān.

"So wait, for they are waiting as well." If the disbelievers refuse to accept the message of Islām and are waiting to cause harm to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, then it should be noted that nothing will materialise from their schemes because Allāh will ensure his safety. Allāh says in Surah Tūr, *"Or do they say, 'He is a poet whose death we are eagerly awaiting'? Say, 'Wait, for I am also waiting with you."*[*Surah 52, verses 30,31*]

سورة الجاثية

Makkan	Surah Al-Jathiyah	Verses 37

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

حمٓ ﴿1﴾ تَنزِيلُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلۡحَكِيمِ ﴿2﴾ إِنَّ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ لَأٓيَٰتٖ لِّلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿3﴾ وَفِي خَلۡقِكُمۡ وَمَا يَبُثُّ مِن دَآبَّةٍ ءَايَٰتٞ لِّقَوۡمٖ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿4﴾ وَٱخۡتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيۡلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مِن رِّزۡقٖ فَأَحۡيَا بِهِ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَا وَتَصۡرِيفِ ٱلرِّيَٰحِ ءَايَٰتٞ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَعۡقِلُونَ ﴿5﴾ تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ نَتۡلُوهَا عَلَيۡكَ بِٱلۡحَقِّۖ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثِۭ بَعۡدَ ٱللَّهِ وَءَايَٰتِهِۦ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿6﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) HāMīm. (2) The revelation of the Book is from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise. (3) There are certainly many signs in the heavens and the earth for the believers. (4) In your creation and the creatures that We have spread out, there are also numerous signs for those with conviction. (5) The alternation of the night and day; the sustenance that Allāh sends from the skies that revives the earth after its death; and the turning of the winds; are all signs for people with understanding. (6) These are Allāh's verses that We recite to you with the truth. So in what fact will they believe in after Allāh and His signs?

THE VARIOUS SIGNS THAT DENOTE THE EXISTENCE AND ONENESS OF ALLĀH

Allāh begins the Surah by saying that *"The revelation of the Book (Qur'ān) is from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise."* Allāh then enumerates the various signs of His grandeur. Allāh says, *"There are certainly many signs in the heavens and the earth for the believers."*

The believers witness these many signs of Allāh's greatness and ponder over them. In so doing, they are affected by Allāh's greatness, which settles deep within their hearts.

Allāh further says, *'in your creation and the creatures that We have spread*

out, there are also numerous signs for those with conviction. The alternation of the night and day; the sustenance (rain) that Allāh sends from the skies that revives the earth after its death; and the turning of the winds; are all signs for people with understanding." The revival of dead earth refers to the flourishing meadows and plantations that grow on the once arid land after good rains fall. The changing of the winds refers to various winds blowing in different directions, some being hot, others cold; some being beneficial and others destructive. People with understanding perceive all these phenomena around them and realise that all of this occurs only by the command and power of Allāh.

"These are Allāh's verses that We recite to you with the truth." The Qur'ān was recited to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who in turn recited it to humanity. It contains all the necessary facts to prove Allāh's oneness and greatness in a single miraculous magnum opus (mighty word of Allāh). If people fail to accept this, there can be nothing else that they can possibly accept. Therefore Allāh says, *"So in what fact will they believe in after Allāh and His signs?"*

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٧﴾ يَسْمَعُ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ يُصِرُّ مُسْتَكْبِرًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَسْمَعْهَا ۖ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٨﴾ وَإِذَا عَلِمَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِنَا شَيْـًٔا ٱتَّخَذَهَا هُزُوًا ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿٩﴾ مِّن وَرَآئِهِمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَلَا يُغْنِى عَنْهُم مَّا كَسَبُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا مَا ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾ هَٰذَا هُدًى ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّن رِّجْزٍ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

(7) Doom be for every lying sinner... (8) ...who hears Allāh's verses being recited to him and then remains haughty as if he had not heard them. Give him the tidings of a tormenting chastisement. (9) When he learns of any one of Our verses, he mocks it. There shall be a humiliating punishment for these people. (10) Before them is Hell. Whatever they earned will be of no avail to them, neither will the patrons that they adopted besides Allāh be (of any avail). A terrible punishment shall be theirs. (11) This is a great guidance, and there awaits a painful punishment of immense proportions for those who disbelieve the verses of their Lord.

AN EXCRUCIATING PUNISHMENT AWAITS EVERY LYING SINNER

Among the polytheists of Makkah there were those die-hards who vehemently opposed Islām and made every effort to obstruct others from accepting Islām. Abu Jahl and Nadhar bin Hārith were two such persons. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" relates that Allāh referred to Nadhar bin Hārith when He says, *"Doom be for every lying sinner..."*

He used to purchase storybooks from foreign countries and narrate these to people so that they may stay away from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and not

listen to the recitation of the Qur'ān. Mention has been made of this in the commentary of verse 6 of Surah Luqmān (*Surah 31*) where Allāh says, *"There are some people who purchase futile discourse to deviate from Allāh's path without knowledge, making a mockery of it (Allāh 's path). There shall be a humiliating punishment for these people."*

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that although the verse refers to a specific person, it applies equally to all people who lie and sin excessively. The Arabic words "affāk" and "athīm" (translated above as "lying sinner") are both in the superlative form and denote people who are lie and sin excessively.

Further describing such a person, Allāh says that he is someone *"Who hears Allāh's verses being recited to him and then remains haughty (without taking heed) as if he had not heard them. Give him the tidings of a tormenting chastisement."* Such a person is under the misconception that he will live forever as a leader in this world. He fails to realise that he will soon have to leave this world and in the Hereafter face the terrible consequences of his disobedience.

Allāh continues with the description of the "lying sinner" when He says, *"When he learns of any one of Our verses, he mocks it. There shall be a humiliating punishment for these people. Before them is Hell. Whatever they earned will be of no avail to them, neither will the patrons that they adopted besides Allāh be (of any avail). A terrible punishment shall be theirs."*

"This (Qur'ān) is a great guidance, and there awaits a painful punishment of immense proportions for those who disbelieve the verses of their Lord." The above verses describe the punishment of Hell as "tormenting" "humiliating", "terrible", "painful" and of "immense proportions". The fact is that the punishment of Hell cannot be described in words.

(12) It is Allāh Who subjugated the oceans for you so that ships may travel on them by His command; so that you may seek from His bounty; and so that you may express gratitude. (13) Allāh has also subjugated for you everything in the heavens and everything on earth. There are definitely signs in this for people who reflect.

THE SUBJUGATION OF EVERYTHING IN THE HEAVENS AND EARTH ARE SIGNS FOR PEOPLE WHO PONDER

In these verses, Allāh speaks about His bounties to man and the signs of oneness of Allāh. Allāh says that He has placed the oceans at man's service so that man may utilise them to transport themselves and their cargo to distant lands by ship. By means of this, people are able to conduct profitable business across the

continents. Allāh has also placed valuable pearls and marine life beneath the oceans, all of which are of tremendous benefit to mankind. These are all part of Allāh's innumerable boons to man, which demand that man expresses gratitude to Him.

In the second verse, Allāh says that He *"has also subjugated for you everything in the heavens and everything on earth."* Allāh has created everything for man's benefit, which man should use in accordance with Allāh's commands. Some of the benefits accrued from these phenomena are of use in this world while others will profit a person in the Hereafter. Thereafter, Allāh says, *"There are definitely signs in this for people who reflect."*

قُل لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ ٱللَّهِ لِيَجْزِيَ قَوْمًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ وَمَنْ أَسَآءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

(14) Tell the believers that they should pardon those who do not look forward to Allāh's days so that Allāh may grant recompense to every nation for what they earn. (15) Whoever does a good deed does so for his own benefit, and whoever commits a sin does so to his own detriment. You will all be returned to your Lord shortly.

TELL THE BELIEVERS THAT THEY SHOULD PARDON THE DISBELIEVERS AND THAT EVERY PERSON'S DEEDS SHALL BE TO HIS OWN BENEFIT OR DETRIMENT

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Tell the believers that they should pardon those who do not look forward to Allāh's days..."* The disbelievers think that situations will remain the same always and that Allāh will not take them to task for what they do. They fail to realise that Allāh changes the condition of people over time and will soon turn conditions against them on account of their sins. This turn of the tide against the disbelievers and sinners is referred to as *"Allāh 's days"*.

Quoting from Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" interprets the verse to mean that the disbelievers are not eager to see the day when Allāh will grant the believers their rewards. The Muslims should overlook these people because they do not believe in the Hereafter at all. Other commentators state that this command to pardon the disbelievers applied only before the command for Jihād (*religious war*) was issued. They maintain that it was annulled after Jihād was ordained. Another group of commentators are of the opinion that the command was never annulled but still applies with reference to the minor hardships that the disbelievers present to the believers.

"....so that Allāh may grant recompense to every nation for what they earn." Allāh will reward the believers for their belief and deeds, while He will also punish the disbelievers for their disbelief and sins. Consequently, Allāh says, *"Whoever does a good deed does so for his own benefit, and whoever commits a sin does so to his own detriment. You will all be returned to your Lord shortly."*

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى
الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿16﴾ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ بَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ ۖ فَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ
الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ
﴿17﴾

(16) Verily We gave the Bani Isrā'īl the Book, command and Prophet hood; sustained them with pure things and granted them excellence over the universe. (17) We also gave them clear proofs concerning Dīn (religion). They differed only after knowledge came to them because of enmity between themselves. Indeed your Lord shall judge between them on the Day of Judgment oncerning the differences they had.

THE VARIOUS BOUNTIES BESTOWED ON THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL

Allāh says that He gave His divine scriptures to the Bani Isrā'īl and also the *"command"*. While some commentators say that this refers to wisdom, others believe that it refers to a good understanding of religious matters. Allāh also blessed them with the privilege of having numerous Prophets عليهم السلام among them. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"(Recall the time) When Mūsa* عليه السلام *told his nation (the Bani Isrā'īl), 'O my people, remember Allāh 's bounty on you when He raised messengers among you and made you kings. He gave you what He never gave anyone in the entire universe. "*[*Surah 5, verse 20*]

Further describing His bounties on the Bani Isrā'īl, Allāh says that He *"sustained them with pure things* (i.e. Halāl *(Lawful)*, nutritious and tasty food) *and granted them excellence over* (the inhabitants of) *the universe* (during their time)."

"We also gave them clear proofs concerning Dīn (religion)." Included in these were Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام miracles. Another interpretation of the *"clear proofs"* is that these refer to the signs that denoted the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Although the Jews were well aware of these signs, they still denied the Prophet hood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"When what they recognise comes to them, they deny it. Allāh's curse is on the disbelievers."* [*Surah 2, verse 89*]

Allāh states further, *"They differed only after knowledge came to them because of enmity between themselves."* They fell into dispute because of a struggle for leadership among themselves. Other commentators state that the Jews differed among themselves because many of them were jealous that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was from among the Arabs and not from among them. Although they were eager to receive the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم initially, they later refused to acknowledge his apostleship because they expected him to be from among them. There were only a few of them who were fortunate enough to embrace Islām. The rest of them opposed Islām and continue to do so to this day.

Allāh declares, *"Indeed your Lord shall judge between them on the Day of Judgment of day concerning the differences they had."*

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَـٰكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ فَٱتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿18﴾ إِنَّهُمْ لَن يُغْنُوا۟ عَنكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ وَلِىُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿19﴾ هَـٰذَا بَصَـٰٓئِرُ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿20﴾

(18) Then We placed you on a special way, so follow it and do not follow the whims of those who have no knowledge. (19) Undoubtedly, these people will never be of any use to you against Allāh. Verily the oppressors are patrons to each other and Allāh is a Protecting Friend to the people with Piety. (20) These are eye-openers for people, a guidance and a mercy for people with conviction.

WE HAVE GIVEN YOU A SPECIAL DĪN (RELIGION). THE DISBELIEVERS CAN BE OF NO USE TO YOU AGAINST ALLĀH

Allāh says to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Then* (after the Dīn (religion) of the Bani Isra'īl) *We placed you on a special way* (Shari'ah), *so follow it and do not follow the whims of those who have no knowledge."* i.e. Do not follow the Quraysh, who follow the ways of their heretical forefathers.

"Undoubtedly, these people will never be of any use to you against Allāh." i.e. If you ever had to follow the Dīn (religion) of the disbelievers, Allāh's punishment is sure to afflict you. The disbelievers would then be unable to be of assistance to you.

"Verily the oppressors (the Jews, Christians, Polytheists and Hypocrites) *are patrons to each other and Allāh is a Protecting Friend to the people with Piety."* Allāh will assist them in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

Referring to the verses of the Qur'ān, Allāh says, *"These are eye-openers for people, a guidance and a mercy for people with conviction."*

أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱجْتَرَحُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن نَّجْعَلَهُمْ كَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ سَوَآءً مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ ۚ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿21﴾ وَخَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿22﴾

(21) Do those who perpetrate sins think that We will treat them like those who believe and who do good deeds, making their lives and deaths equal? Evil indeed is the decision they take. (22) Allāh has created the heavens and the earth with the truth so that every soul may be recompensed for what it does, and people will not be oppressed.

DO THE SINNERS THINK THAT THEY WILL BE TREATED LIKE THOSE BELIEVERS WHO DO GOOD DEEDS?

Allāh refutes the statement of those disbelievers who claimed that the

believers were no better than themselves. They believed that Allāh will grant them riches in the Hereafter just as He gives them in this world. Allāh quotes one of these disbelievers in Surah HāMīm Sajdah who said, *"If I am ever returned to my Lord, I shall definitely have something better than this."* [*Surah 41, verse 50*]

Allāh refutes their statement by asking, *"Do those who perpetrate sins think that We will treat them like those who believe and who do good deeds, making their lives and deaths equal? Evil indeed is the decision they take."* The two types of people can never be the same because the righteous believers believe in Allāh, worship Him and obey His every command. On the other hand, the disbelievers reject Allāh, are ungrateful for His bounties and disobey His commands. After death, the righteous believers will be admitted into Heaven while the disbelievers and the sinners will be doomed to Hell. Therefore, neither their lives nor their deaths are the same. The believers are better than the disbelievers in both worlds.

"Allāh has created the heavens and the earth with the truth (i.e. with wisdom) so that every soul may be recompensed for what it does, and people will not be oppressed." Every person will receive the full reward for every good deed and will be punished only for the sins he committed. Therefore, one of the reasons for creating the heavens and the earth is for people to recognise Allāh's might. Once a person recognises this, one will realise that Allāh is certainly Capable of resurrecting the dead and giving people the rewards and punishment for their deeds.

Verse 33 of Surah Ahqāf asks: *"Do they not see that Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth and did not tire from creating them has the power to give life to the dead? Certainly! Allāh has power over all things."* [*Surah 46, verse 33*]

أَفَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِۦ وَقَلْبِهِۦ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ
بَصَرِهِۦ غِشَٰوَةً فَمَن يَهْدِيهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ (23) وَقَالُوا۟ مَا هِىَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا ٱلدُّنْيَا
نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَآ إِلَّا ٱلدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ (24) وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ
عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ مَّا كَانَ حُجَّتَهُمْ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ ٱئْتُوا۟ بِـَٔابَآئِنَآ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ (25) قُلِ
ٱللَّهُ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يَجْمَعُكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ (26)

(23) Have you seen the one who has taken his whims as a deity; whom Allāh has sent astray despite his knowledge; whose ears and hearts Allāh has sealed and on whose eyes Allāh has cast a veil? Who can guide him after Allāh? Will you not take heed? (24) They say, "This is merely our worldly life. We live and die and it is only time that will destroy us." They have no proof for this but only speculate. (25) When Our clear verses are recited to them, the only counter evidence they can present is to say, "Bring forth our forefathers if you are truthful." (26) Say, "Allāh gave you life, will give you death and will then gather

you all for the Day of Judgment about which there is no doubt. However most people do not know."

HAVE YOU SEEN THE PERSON WHO TAKES HIS WHIMS AS HIS GOD?

Allāh explains the deviant nature of the polytheists who not only worship gods besides Allāh but even reject the advent of Judgment day. Allāh says that these people have reached such a low ebb in spiritual degradation that they worship whatever catches their fancy. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that it was customary among the pagan Arabs to worship a particular stone and then discard it once they found another stone that appealed to them. In this manner, they took as gods whatever their whims desired.

Another interpretation of the verse is that a person does and says whatever he desires. Such people neither have love for guidance nor abhorrence for falsehood and deviation. They therefore become rudderless and susceptible to do whatever their whims demand of them. The Arabic word for whims is "Hawā". Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that "Hawā" is condemned everywhere it appears in the Qur'ān. Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"If they do not respond to you, then you should know that they are only following their whims. Who can be more unjust than the one who follows his whims (Hawā) without any guidance from Allāh? Verily Allāh does not guide an unjust nation."* [*Surah 28, verse 50*]

IMPORTANT NOTES CONCERNING THE FOLLOWING OF ONE'S WHIMS

Just as following one's whims will prevent a disbeliever from accepting Islām, it also leads a Muslim to perpetrate sins without restraint. The Muslim will then be slave to the dictates of his carnal desires and will forsake Salāh, zakāh and Lawful *(Halāl)* earnings in the process. The Muslim will then have no regard for Lawful *(Halāl)* food and will ape the dressing and lifestyles of the disbelievers.

Following one's whims will catapult one to destruction while opposing one's whims will secure salvation in both worlds. Allāh says in Surah Nāzi'āt, *"As for the one who fears standing before his Lord and restrains himself from his whims, then Heaven shall certainly be the abode for him."* [*Surah 79, verse 40, 41*]

A believer should always beware of his whims. Although it is permissible to satisfy certain desires, a person will destroy himself if he sets out to fulfil every desire. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The intelligent person is he who controls his desires and performs deeds for the life after death. The foolish person is he who lets himself follow his whims and entertains foolish hopes of Allāh's mercy." [*"Mishkāt" p. 451*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that three factors secure success while another three lead to destruction. The three that secure success are:

- Fearing Allāh in private and in public.
- Speaking the truth when happy and when displeased.

- Adopting moderation when in poverty and when enjoying prosperity.

The three factors that lead to destruction are:

- Following the dictates of one's whims.
- Miserliness.
- Being proud of oneself. This is the most dangerous of the three. [*"Mishlkāt" p. 434*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "None of you has believed until his desires become subject to the Dīn (religion) I have brought." [*"Mishkāt" p. 30*]

Allāh says, "Have you seen the one who takes his whims as his god; whom Allāh has sent astray despite his knowledge; whose ears and hearts Allāh has sealed and on whose eyes Allāh has cast a veil? Who can guide him after Allāh? Will you not take heed?" As a person begins to serve the dictates of his whims, he gradually loses the capacity to accept the truth. At this stage his knowledge also ceases to be of use to him. He then turns a deaf ear to the truth, refuses to accept it, and cannot see what is right. Once he has deviated this far, there can be no hope of him ever finding the path to salvation.

THE RESPONSE TO A FOOLISH STATEMENT OF THE ATHEISTS

"They say, 'This is merely our worldly life. We live and die and it is only time that will destroy us." These disbelievers believe that people have to live their lives only in this world and then die to make way for those to come after them. They refuse to believe in resurrection and reckoning. Non-Muslims have always held the belief that time does everything. Although many of them may even have faith in Allāh, they believe that time causes life, death, vicissitudes in conditions and adversities. When people curse time for their difficulties, they are actually directing the curse at Allāh because everything happens by Allāh's will. In fact, time itself is Allāh's creation.

There are many people who believe that there is no beginning and no end to the universe and that everything is the effect of time. Such people are generally referred to as atheists. Time is merely the change of night and day and really has no effect on things. Time itself is not stable, but varies. These people have no reply when they are asked how time can affect the formation of a person's heart and limbs? They are equally speechless when asked how time affects the fact that a grape is small while a mango is larger? Why is the water of the sea salty while the water of rivers is not? Why are there so many types and sizes of animals? Why do some people have children while others do not? Why do some have only sons, while others have only daughters? The atheists have no reply to these and millions of other questions.

Allāh asserts, *"They have no proof for this but only speculate."* Everything they say is mere conjecture and without any basis. Their denial of Judgment day will not halt the advent of Judgment day. Judgment day will still take place irrespective of their beliefs. They will then regret their beliefs when they are

faced with the worst punishment of Hell.

THE ARGUMENT OF THOSE WHO DENY JUDGMENT DAY

"When Our clear verses are recited to them (affirming the advent of Judgment day) *the only counterevidence they can present is to say, 'Bring forth our forefathers if you are truthful."* Unable to present a proof to substantiate their claim, all the disbelievers can say is that they want to see their long dead forefathers raised so that they may witness resurrection for themselves. In addition to this, they claim that they can then ask their forefathers about what happens after death.

Allāh replies to them by saying, *"Say, 'Allāh gave you life, will give you death and will then gather you all for the Day of Judgment about which there is no doubt. However most people do not know.'* Allāh is not forced to accede to their requests. The message of Judgment day has been passed on to them in clear terms and the signs are evident. It is now the choice of every person to accept.

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَخْسَرُ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿27﴾ وَتَرَىٰ كُلَّ
أُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً ۚ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ تُدْعَىٰ إِلَىٰ كِتَٰبِهَا ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿28﴾ هَٰذَا كِتَٰبُنَا يَنطِقُ
عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنسِخُ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿29﴾ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَيُدْخِلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿30﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟
أَفَلَمْ تَكُنْ ءَايَٰتِى تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَٱسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ وَكُنتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿31﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ
وَٱلسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُم مَّا نَدْرِى مَا ٱلسَّاعَةُ إِن نَّظُنُّ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُسْتَيْقِنِينَ ﴿32﴾
وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿33﴾ وَقِيلَ ٱلْيَوْمَ نَنسَىٰكُمْ كَمَا نَسِيتُمْ
لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا وَمَأْوَىٰكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿34﴾ ذَٰلِكُم بِأَنَّكُمُ ٱتَّخَذْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
هُزُوًا وَغَرَّتْكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ فَٱلْيَوْمَ لَا يُخْرَجُونَ مِنْهَا وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿35﴾ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْحَمْدُ
رَبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَرَبِّ ٱلْأَرْضِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿36﴾ وَلَهُ ٱلْكِبْرِيَآءُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿37﴾

(27) To Allāh belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. On the day that Reckoning day will take place, the people of falsehood will be at a loss. (28) You will see every nation on their knees and every nation will be called towards their Book. "Today you will be recompensed for what you did." (29) "This is Our Book which speaks against you with the truth. Verily We used to have everything you did recorded." (30) As for those who believe and do good deeds, their Lord shall enter them into His mercy. That is the ultimate success. (31) As for those who disbelieved (Allāh will tell them), "Were My verses not recited

unto you, and in spite of this you were arrogant and were a sinful nation?" (32) "When it was said that Allāh's promise is true and there is no doubt in the advent of Judgment day, you people used to say, 'We do not know what Judgment day is. We merely give it a passing thought but have never been convinced about it.'" (33) The evil of what they do shall become evident before them and they will be surrounded by the consequences of their mockery. (34) It will be said, "Today We shall forget you just as you forgot your meeting of this day. Your abode shall be the Fire and you shall have no helpers. (35) "This is because you treated Allāh's verses as a joke and were beguiled by the life of this world." Today they will neither be removed from the Fire nor will they be given the opportunity to please Allāh. (36) All praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the heavens, the Lord of the earth and the Lord of the universe. (37) All majesty is His in the heavens and the earth and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

THE PEOPLE OF FALSEHOOD WILL BE AT A LOSS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT WHEN EVERY NATION WILL BE ON ITS KNEES

These verses bring Surah Jāthiya to a close. Allāh states, *"To Allāh belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth.'* Allāh has created all of this and is the Controller of it all. This subject is repeated in the last verses after Judgment day is mentioned.

Allāh says further, *"On the day that Reckoning will take place, the people of falsehood will be at a loss."* This group includes all the disbelievers, polytheists, hypocrites and sinners. These people amassed a great deal of wealth in this world and also attained high social ranks and esteem. It was for the preservation of these things that they denied the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام. However, on the Day of Judgment they will arrive before Allāh without any wealth, family, children and position. Everything they exerted themselves for in this world will be left behind. All that they will have will be their sinful deeds, which will seal their damnation.

"You will see every nation on their knees..." They will be in this condition because of the fear that will overcome them. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه translated the verse as: *"You will see all the nations gathered together."*

"... every nation will be called towards their Book. "i.e. every person will be summoned to view hioner record of their deeds, which will be given in every person's hand. Thereafter, reckoning will take place and Allāh will tell the people, *"Today you will be recompensed for what you did. This is Our Book which speaks against you with the truth. Verily We used to have everything you did recorded."* Allāh has appointed angels to record people's deeds. This record will be used as evidence against them on the Day of Judgment.

NOTE : The above verse states that *"every"* nation will be in its knees because of fear. However, it should be borne in mind that the pious believers [especially the Prophets عليهم السلام] are not included in the implication of this verse because Allāh says in Surah Naml, *"And they will be safe from the terror of that day."* If it is assumed that the kneeling will not be on account of fear, then it is possible that they will also be required to do so for a brief

period on the Day of Judgment.

Allāh continues to say, *"As for those who believe and do good deeds, their Lord shall enter them into His mercy* (i.e. Heaven, which is an embodiment of Allāh's mercy). *That is the ultimate success."* Allāh then discusses the plight of the disbelievers who will suffer the terrible torments of Hell. When they will plead for reprieve, Allāh will ask them, *"Were My verses not recited unto you, and in spite of this you were arrogant and were a sinful nation?"* i.e. You shall now have to suffer for the arrogance and disobedience you displayed in the world.

Allāh will remind them further by saying, *"When it was said that Allāh's promise is true and there is no doubt in the advent of Judgment day, you people used to say, 'We do not know what Judgment day is. We merely give it a passing thought but have never been convinced about it.'"* Besides denying Qiyamah *(Qiyāmah day)*, they also made a mockery of whatever the Prophets عليهم السلام brought to them. Allāh says that on the Day of Judgment *"The evil of what they do shall become evident before them and they will be surrounded by the consequences (punishment) of their mockery."*

Furthermore, the disbelievers will be told, *"Today We shall forget you (i.e. leave you to burn in Hell and be eternally deprived of mercy) just as you forgot your meeting of this day. Your abode shall be the Fire and you shall have no helpers."*

The people of Hell will be reminded that they suffer the punishment of Hell because they *"treated Allāh's verses as a joke and were beguiled by the life of this world. Today they will neither be removed from the Fire nor will they be given the opportunity to please Allāh."* No person will be allowed to repent in the Hereafter. The opportunity to make Taubah (*repentance*) is restricted to this worldly life.

Allāh concludes the Surah by declaring, *"All praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the heavens, the Lord of the earth and the Lord of the universe. All majesty is His in the heavens and the earth and He is the Mighty, the Wise."*

PART TWENTY SIX

سورة الاحقاف

Makkan	Surah Al-Ahqaf	Verses 35

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

حمٓ (1) تَنزِيلُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ (2) مَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ عَمَّآ أُنذِرُوا۟ مُعْرِضُونَ (3) قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُم مَّا
تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَرُونِى مَاذَا خَلَقُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ ۖ ٱئْتُونِى
بِكِتَٰبٍ مِّن قَبْلِ هَٰذَآ أَوْ أَثَٰرَةٍ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ (4) وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ
مِمَّن يَدْعُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَن لَّا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُۥٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَهُمْ عَن دُعَآئِهِمْ غَٰفِلُونَ
(5) وَإِذَا حُشِرَ ٱلنَّاسُ كَانُوا۟ لَهُمْ أَعْدَآءً وَكَانُوا۟ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كَٰفِرِينَ (6) وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ
ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ (7)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) HāMīm. (2) This is a revealed Book from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise. (3) We have created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two with wisdom and (until) a specified term. The disbelievers are averse to the warnings they are given. (4) Say, "Tell me about those whom you worship besides Allāh. Show me what they have created from the earth, or do they have a partnership in the heavens? Bring me a book before this or a shred of reported evidence if you are truthful." (5) Who can be more misled than the one who calls to beings besides Allāh who cannot respond to him until the Day of Judgment and who are totally unaware of their call? (6) When people are resurrected they will be enemies to them and will deny their worship. (7) When Our clear verses are recited to them, the disbelievers say about the truth as it comes to them, "This is manifest magic!"

THE GODS OF THE POLYTHEISTS HAVE NOT CREATED ANYTHING AND CANNOT RESPOND TO THEIR CALLS

Allāh declares that He created the heavens, the earth and everything between the two with perfect wisdom and they will exist until a term that Allāh has already predestined. The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes that the *"specified term"* refers to the Day of Judgment, when the entire universe will be destroyed.

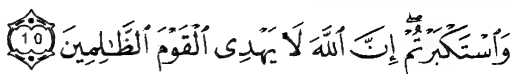
Allāh then depicts the foolishness of the Polytheists when He says that they pray to such beings who will never have the ability to even hear their prayer. Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"Say* (to the polytheists), *'Tell me about those whom you worship besides Allāh. Show me what they have created from the earth, or do they have a partnership in the heavens?"'* There is nothing on earth that their gods have created and they have no say over matters in the heavens. Any sensible person will therefore realise that there is no reason for them to be worshipped.

Besides common sense, a person may have learned about these gods from a divine book that was revealed before the Qur'ān or from something reported from their predecessors. However, the polytheists have no basis for their beliefs even from these quarters. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"Bring me a book before this or a shred of reported evidence* (to prove your stand) *if you are truthful."*

Allāh continues to say, *"Who can be more misled than the one who calls to beings besides Allāh who cannot respond to him until the Day of Judgment and who are totally unaware of their call? When people are resurrected they will be enemies to them and will deny their worship."* i.e. the worshippers will be enemies to their gods or vice versa. Either interpretation will be valid because there will be mutual enmity between the two parties.

A FOOLISH STATEMENT OF THOSE WHO REJECT THE QUR'ĀN

Allāh states, *"When Our clear verses are recited to them, the disbelievers say about the truth as it comes to them, 'This is manifest magic!* " They made this statement because they had nothing to reply to the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān. This was nothing new in the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because the nations of the previous Prophets عليهم السلام also made similar statements. Allāh says in Surah Dhāriyāt, *"In the same way, whenever a The Holy Prophet came to those before them they said, 'He is a magician or a madman."* [*Surah 51, verse 52*]

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ قُلْ إِنِ ٱفْتَرَيْتُهُۥ فَلَا تَمْلِكُونَ لِى مِنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ
كَفَىٰ بِهِۦ شَهِيدًۢا بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَهُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿8﴾ قُلْ مَا كُنتُ بِدْعًا مِّنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ وَمَآ
أَدْرِى مَا يُفْعَلُ بِى وَلَا بِكُمْ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿9﴾ قُلْ
أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَفَرْتُم بِهِۦ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِۦ فَـَٔامَنَ

(8) Or do they say that he has fabricated it? Say, "If I have fabricated it then you people will be unable to assist me against Allāh at all. He knows best about what you discuss concerning it. He suffices as Witness between us and He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful" (9) Say, "I am not a new thing among the messengers and I have no idea about what will happen to me and you people. I follow only what has been revealed to me and I am only a clear warner. (10) Say, "Tell me. What if this Qur'ān is really from Allāh and you people deny it and are arrogant whereas a witness from the Bani Isrā'īl testifies to a similar book and believes in it? Verily Allāh does not guide an oppressive nation."

A REPLY TO THE POLYTHEISTS WHEN THEY CLAIMED THAT THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم FABRICATED THE QUR'ĀN

Whenever the polytheists heard the Qur'ān, they made spiteful statements. One of these statements was that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had fabricated the Qur'ān. In other words, they said that Allāh had not revealed anything because the Qur'ān was a composition of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In reply to this allegation, Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them, *"If I have fabricated it then* (Allāh will certainly punish me for lying about the Qur'ān being His word and) *you people will be unable to assist me against Allāh at all."*

Allāh says in Surah Hāqqa, *"If he* [Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] *has (falsely) attributed some words to Us We shall grab him by his right hand. We shall then sever his jugular vein and none of you will be able to protect him."* [*Surah 69, verses 44-47*]

Since people will be unable to assist the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم against Allāh's punishment, it would have been futile for him to fabricate lies merely to please them.

"He knows best about what you discuss concerning it." Allāh has perfect knowledge about what the disbelievers says about the Qur'ān. At times they refer to it as magic, while at other times they call it a fabrication. This part of the verse warns them that they should not dwell under the misconception that they can escape Allāh because Allāh will take them to task for whatever they say about the Qur'ān.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is told to further tell the polytheists, *"He suffices as Witness between us..."* Allāh is Witness that the polytheists deny the Qur'ān, and Allāh also witnesses that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم propagated the Qur'ān as he was commanded. Allāh will therefore punish them for their rejection. However, if they repent and accept Islām, Allāh will certainly accept their repentance and forgive them because *"He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."* The fact that the disbelievers and polytheists are still alive and being sustained is a sign that Allāh is Most Merciful. Otherwise, He would have destroyed them.

"Say, 'I am not a new thing among the messengers...'" There were many Prophets عليهم السلام before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, about whom people

received reports in such abundance and from so many different sources that it is impossible to refute them. Just as the previous Prophets عليهم السلام invited people to accept oneness of Allāh, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did the same. Just as they performed miracles in front of the people, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did the same.

However, just as it was not necessary for any of the Prophets عليهم السلام to accede to the requests of the people when they demanded to see certain miracles, the same was also not necessary for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In addition to this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made it clear to them that he did not possess knowledge of the unseen. Neither did he ever claim to possess this knowledge nor is such knowledge a condition for someone to claim prophethood. Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that since he does not possess knowledge of the unseen, he should tell the people *"I have no idea about what will happen to me and you people. I follow only what has been revealed to me and I am only a clear warner.*

"Say, 'Tell me. What if this Qur'ān is really from Allāh and you people deny it and are arrogant whereas a witness from the Bani Isrā'īl testifies to a similar book and believes in it? Verily Allāh does not guide an oppressive nation." This verse prompts the disbelievers to ponder over their situation. By doing so, they will be guided to accept Islām. The verse is also a reply to a previous objection where the Polytheists accused the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of fabricating the Qur'ān. Allāh tells them that while they obstinately reject the Qur'ān, there has been a witness from among the learned scholars of the Bani Isrā'īl who attested to the truth of the Qur'ān and accepted it as Allāh's word.

The disbelievers are prompted to think that they will be unable to avert Allāh's punishment when it afflicts them on account of their disbelief. There are many factors to prove that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's messenger and that the Qur'ān is Allāh's Book. Another proof of this was that the Jews anticipated that Allāh's final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was soon to appear among the Arabs and awaited his arrival. They accepted Islām, realising that the Qur'ān is certainly from Allāh.

The Arabs accepted the fact that the Jews were knowledgeable people and had already asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم several questions which they learnt from the Jews (e.g. about the soul, the people of the cave and Dhul Qarnain). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had furnished the correct replies for all of these questions, thus proving that he received revelation from Allāh. There was therefore nothing to prevent them from accepting Islām. The only thing that did prevent them from accepting Islām was the arrogance that had permeated into their hearts. They are thus advised to shun their arrogance before it leads them to the depths of Hell.

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has written that the Arabic phrase "Alā Mithlih" (translated above as *"a similar")* is an extra addition that will not affect the meaning of the other words (this is common in Arabic to 'decorate' a text). The verse will therefore mean that the witness from the Bani Isrā'īl has attested to the truth of the Qur'ān itself.

Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that the verse contains a

hidden phrase that reads: *"Who can be more misled than you people?"* Therefore, the entire verse would convey the meaning that who can be more misled than you people who are arrogant and who deny the truth when a witness from among the Bani Isrā'īl has already attested to the truth of the Qur'ān and believed in it? Therefore, the verse is similar to verse 52 of Surah HāMīm Sajdah (*Surah 41*) where Allāh says, *"Say, 'Tell me. If this Qur'ān is really from Allāh and you reject it, who will be further astray than the person who is in fanatical opposition?"'*

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَوْ كَانَ خَيْرًا مَّا سَبَقُونَآ إِلَيْهِ وَإِذْ لَمْ يَهْتَدُوا۟ بِهِۦ
فَسَيَقُولُونَ هَٰذَآ إِفْكٌ قَدِيمٌ (11) وَمِن قَبْلِهِۦ كِتَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً وَهَٰذَا كِتَٰبٌ
مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّسَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّيُنذِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُحْسِنِينَ (12) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟
رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (13) أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ (14)

(11) The disbelievers say to the believers, "If this (faith) were good, you people would never have beaten us to it." If they have not been guided by means of the Qur'ān they would say, "This is an old lie!" (12) Before it was the book of Mūsa which was a leader and a mercy. This book is a confirmation in Arabic to warn the oppressors and it is glad tidings for those who do good. (13) Verily those who say, "Our Lord is Allāh" and are then steadfast, they shall have no fear neither shall they grieve. (14) These are the people of Heaven where they will abide forever as a reward for the deeds they carried out.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE DISBELIEVERS, THE EXCELLENCE OF THE TORAH AND THE REWARD FOR THOSE WHO POSSESS BELIEF AND REMAIN STEADFAST

Man has an almost instinctive inclination to consider himself better than others. Rich people regard themselves to be better and more intelligent than the poor just as certain tribes regard themselves to be superior to others. Referring to the same psyche of man, Allāh speaks about the attitude of the disbelievers who rated themselves to be superior than the believers. They felt that they were more worthy of receiving any good. Therefore, they said to the Muslims, *"If this (faith of Islām) were good, you people would never have beaten us to it."*

They reasoned that if Islām were good they would have been the first to accept it. However, since people of lower social standing had beaten them to accept Islām, they contended that Islām must be something inferior. They held the opinion that none could ever beat them to something good. The arrogance of these people led them to rate themselves as the best of people, thereby depriving themselves of true belief and Heaven.

Allāh says further, *"If they have not been guided by means of the Qur'ān they would say, 'This is an old lie!'"* They argued that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had

someone write ancient tales for him when he composed the Qur'ān. All their arguments stemmed from obstinacy. To this day, none has ever risen to the challenge of the Qur'ān to produce even a single Surah of its kind.

Allāh then speaks of the Torah when He says, *"Before it (the Qur'ān) was the book of Mūsa which was a leader and a mercy. This book (the Qur'ān) is a confirmation in Arabic to warn the oppressors (i.e. the polytheists of Makkah) and it is glad tidings for those who do good."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has interpreted the verse to mean that the disbelievers are foolish to reject the Qur'ān when they have accepted the Torah as a scripture from Allāh. Just as the subject matter of the Torah called to Allāh, the Qur'ān does the same because Allāh has revealed them both. It was therefore foolish for the polytheists to reject the Qur'ān especially since they spoke Arabic and could perceive that the Qur'ān was truly miraculous in nature.

It may also be said that the verse serves to console the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that just as there were believers and non-believers of the Torah, there will be the same two groups with regard to the Qur'ān. Those who rejected the Torah also harassed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and told him that it was an "old lie" or a fabrication. However, he exercised patience and persevered. Therefore, the same was desired from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"Verily those who say, 'Our Lord is Allāh' and are then steadfast, they shall have no fear neither shall they grieve." This verse speaks about those people who declare that Allāh is their Lord and have this conviction embedded in their hearts. This condition is not temporary, but of a permanent nature as denoted by the word *"steadfast"*. The word also denotes that such people fulfil the rights and demands of belief.

Steadfastness is an exceptionally great trait which cannot be under estimated. Sayyidina Sufyān bin Abdillah Thaqafi رحمة الله عليه once asked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! The injunctions of Islām are numerous. Show me something that I may steadfastly hold on to." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Say, 'I believe in Allāh' and then remain steadfast."

With regard to these people Allāh states, *"These are the people of Heaven where they will abide forever as a reward for the deeds they carried out."*

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا ۖ وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ
ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ
الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ إِنِّي تُبْتُ
إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿15﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَن
سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَعْدَ الصِّدْقِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿16﴾ وَالَّذِي قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ
أُفٍّ لَّكُمَا أَتَعِدَانِنِي أَنْ أُخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ الْقُرُونُ مِن قَبْلِي وَهُمَا يَسْتَغِيثَانِ اللَّهَ وَيْلَكَ

ءَامِنْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَيَقُولُ مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ حَقَّ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَوْلُ فِىٓ أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ خَٰسِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾
وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا۟ ۖ وَلِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

(15) We enjoined man to treat his parents kindly. His mother bore him with hardship and delivered him with hardship and his bearing and weaning are for thirty months. Until the time arrives when he comes of strength and reaches the age of forty he says, "O my Lord! Grant me the ability to be grateful for the bounties that You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents and that I carry out good deeds that You are pleased with. And create sound capabilities in my progeny. Verily I repent to You and am from among those who surrender to You." (16) These are the people from whom We accept their good deeds, overlook their sins and will be among the people of Heaven (Jannah) because of the true promise that they have been promised. (17) The one who says to his parents, "Fie upon you two! Do you warn me that I shall be raised when many generations have passed before me?" The two of them seek Allāh's assistance saying, "Woe to you! Believe! Allāh's promise is true." He then says, "These are only tales of the old folk." (18) These are the people upon whom the decree has been passed from nations of men and Jinn who have passed on before them They were all certain losers. (19) For every one there shall be ranks because of their deeds so that they may earn the full recompense for their deeds and they will not be shown the least injustice.

THE COMMAND REGARDING PARENTS, THE SUPPLICATION AND REWARDS OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE PUNISHMENT OF THE DISOBEDIENT

Allāh says, *"We enjoined man to treat his parents kindly."* The subject of treating parents kindly was discussed in verse 8 of Surah Ankabūt (*Surah 29*) and verse 14 of Surah Luqmān (*Surah 31*). Parents have to be treated kindly and obeyed because they are the visible cause of bringing a person into the world and have to endure great hardships and sacrifices to bring up their children.

Allāh then describes the difficulties that a mother endures for her children. Allāh says, *"His mother bore him with hardship and delivered him with hardship."* A mother carries her child in her womb for many months, enduring tremendous discomfort, pain and difficulty during this period. Eventually, when the time arrives for her to deliver the child, she has to bear the excruciating labour pains and then the indescribable pains of the birth itself.

"His bearing and weaning are for thirty months." The average child usually remains in the mother's belly and is suckled for a sum period of thirty months. Even during this period, the mother has to care for the child while the father arranges for the necessities of the child.

Allāh then proceeds to describe that believer who appreciates Allāh's bounties as well as the services that his parents rendered to him. Allāh says about him, *"Until the time arrives when he comes of strength and reaches the age of*

forty..." The age of forty is regarded as the prime of mental maturity because a person is neither deceived by the passions and ambitions of youth nor does he experience the weakness and handicap of old age.

Allāh says that such a person makes the following supplication before Allāh: *"O my Lord! Grant me the ability to be grateful for the bounties that You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents and that I carry out good deeds that You are pleased with."* Not only does he make Supplication for his own piety and good deeds, but he also has concern for his offspring. Therefore, he continues to entreat Allāh saying, *"And create sound capabilities in my progeny."* He prays to Allāh to bless his progeny with capabilities that will benefit him and them in both worlds. If children are pious, they will carry out deeds that are pleasing to their parents and will serve them well. In this manner, the parents will be pleased and live a contented life.

When parents ensure that their children lead pious lives, they will also receive the rewards for the good deeds of their children without the rewards of the children being diminished in the least. In addition to this, pious children always make supplication for their parents.

Apart from making supplication for the ability to do good and for his children, Allāh's pious bondsman also seeks Allāh's forgiveness and confirms his submission to Allāh. Quoting the remainder of his supplication, Allāh says that he prays, *"Verily I repent to You and am from among those who surrender to You."*

Referring to pious believers like the one described above, Allāh says, *"These are the people from whom We accept their good deeds, overlook their sins and will be among the people of Heaven because of the true promise that they have been promised."* This refers to Allāh's promise of salvation that He conveyed to the people via the Prophets عليهم السلام.

SOME IMPORTANT NOTES

NOTE 1: The above verse makes it clear that every person must at least once in his youth (especially at 40) express gratitude to Allāh for all His favours. Although it is always necessary to show gratitude to Allāh, it is especially important when one has reached the prime of his intelligence and consciousness. A person should be grateful for what Allāh has granted to him as well as to his parents. He should also have concern for the spiritual welfare of his children and specially pray to Allāh for this.

NOTE 2: The verse has specified that the mother will bear and wean the child within a period of 30 months. The Muslim jurists have interpreted the verse to mean that a woman bears a child for six months, after which she can suckle him for the remaining 24 months. The minimum period of human gestation is therefore 6 months, whereas the maximum period of suckling is two years. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, (that is) for those who wish to complete the (full period of) suckling."* [*Surah 2, verse 233*]

Allāh says in Surah Luqmān, *"His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness and his weaning is after two years."* Both these verses also make it clear that a child may be suckled for two years. The Qur'ān does not stipulate the maximum period of pregnancy. The author of "Hidāyah" has written that the maximum period of pregnancy is two years. He substantiates this with a narration of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها which states that a child cannot live longer than two years in a mother's womb even though the (extra) period be equivalent to the shadow of a spindle. [*Dār Qutni*]

When this ruling was mentioned to Sayyidina Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه, he commented, "Who says this? Every one of my neighbour's four children was born after (a pregnancy of) four years." It has also been narrated that Sayyidina Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه himself stayed in his mother's womb for three years, where he even grew his teeth. Since such cases are extremely rare, we will not delve into the details.

If a woman gives birth to a child before six lunar months after marriage, the child will not be regarded as legitimate because the minimum gestation period of a human is six months. It will then be obvious that the child was conceived out of wedlock.

NOTE 3: *"His mother bore him with hardship and delivered him with hardship."* Thereafter, during the next two years of suckling and the following years of tending, it is the mother who does most of the work for the child. Although the father works hard to see that the child receives the necessities, the mother has to do most of the tending and caring. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم emphasised that a person serves one's mother.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrates that someone once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to whom he should give priority in service and kind treatment. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Your mother." "Who next?" was the next question. Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم thrice repeated, "Your mother" to the next three questions of "Who next?". It was only on the fourth question that he said, 'Your father." [*Bukhari p. 883*]

The Scholars have mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم thrice repeated the right of the mother because of the three hardships of bearing, delivering and suckling that she suffers. A person must also give preference to his mother when he spends his wealth.

After speaking about the believer who serves and obeys his parents, Allāh makes mention of the one who is given to being rebellious. Since he is a disbeliever, his parents entreat him to believe in Allāh and the Day of Judgment. However, he obstinately retorts, *"Fie upon you two! Do you warn me that I shall be raised when many generations have passed before me* (without being raised to this day)?"

"The two of them seek Allāh's assistance (by praying to Allāh to guide him) *saying* (to him), *'Woe to you! Believe! Allāh's promise is true.'"* They try to convince him about the truth of Judgment day and that it cannot be said that Judgment day will never take place merely because it has still not occurred. It will take

place at its appointed time which is known only to Allāh. However, unmoved bytheir appeals he tells them that Judgment day and resurrection *"are only tales of the old folk."*

"These are the people upon whom the decree (of punishment) has been passed from nations of men and Jinn who have passed on before them. They were all certain losers." Because they rejected the truth and refused to accept Islām, they will be at a total loss when they have to face the eternal punishment of Hell.

Allāh further says, *"For every one there shall be ranks (in Heaven for the good and in Hell for the evil) because of their deeds so that they may earn the full recompense for their deeds and they will not be shown the least injustice."* No deed of a believer will be wasted and none shall be punished for something s/he was innocent of.

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ أَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبَٰتِكُمْ فِى حَيَاتِكُمُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهَا فَٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ ٱلْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

(20) The day when the disbelievers will be presented to the Fire. "You have used your good things in your worldly life and enjoyed yourself with it. Today you will be recompensed with a disgracing punishment because you behaved proudly on earth without cause and because you were disobedient."

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL BE TOLD THAT THEY HAVE WASTED THEIR DEEDS AND WILL HAVE TO SUFFER A HUMILIATING PUNISHMENT IN THE HEREAFTER

When the disbelievers will be presented for punishment on the Day of Judgment, it will be made clear to them that they will suffer in Hell because they regarded this world as a place of mere entertainment and pursued every whim and desire. They did not have any concern to discern between Lawful *(Halāl)* and Unlawful and regarded it below their dignity to accept Islām. As a result of this arrogance, they will be subjected to a punishment that will humiliate them. It was with a view to this that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Sahabah *(Companions of Prophet)* رضى الله عنهم and the pious believers shunned the fulfilment of their desires in exchange for the rewards of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that he once visited The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while Allāh's Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was lying on a straw mat, the pattern of which was imprinted upon his blessed body. He was resting his head on a leather pillow which was stuffed with the bark of a date palm. Seeing this situation, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه said, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Pray to Allāh to grant prosperity to your Ummah. The Romans and Persians have abundant wealth whereas they do not even believe in Allāh."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "O son of Khattāb! Are you still dwelling under the same misconception? These are the people who are given things of enjoyment in this very world. Does it not please you that they will have this world while we shall have the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*?" [*"Mishkāt" p. 447*]

Sayyidina Zaid bin Aslam رضى الله عنه reports that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once asked for water. When he was brought some water sweetened with honey he said, "This is an excellent thing but I will not drink it because Allāh has condemned those people who fulfil their desires when He says, *'You have used your good things in your worldly life and enjoyed yourself with it.'* I am therefore afraid to use things of pleasure because it should not happen that we are given everything in this world (and nothing in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*)." Saying this, he did not drink the mixture. [*"Mishkāt" p. 449*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once saw him eating some meat and asked, "O Jābir! What is this?" Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه replied, "I had a desire to eat some meat so I bought some." Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه commented, "Do you buy everything that you desire? Are you not afraid of the verse *'You have used your good things in your worldly life and enjoyed yourself with it.'* [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

وَاذْكُرْ أَخَا عَادٍ إِذْ أَنذَرَ قَوْمَهُ بِالْأَحْقَافِ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ النُّذُرُ مِن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ أَلَّا
تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿21﴾ قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِتَأْفِكَنَا عَنْ آلِهَتِنَا
فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿22﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَأُبَلِّغُكُم مَّا
أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ وَلَٰكِنِّي أَرَاكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿23﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ عَارِضًا مُّسْتَقْبِلَ أَوْدِيَتِهِمْ
قَالُوا هَٰذَا عَارِضٌ مُّمْطِرُنَا بَلْ هُوَ مَا اسْتَعْجَلْتُم بِهِ رِيحٌ فِيهَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿24﴾ تُدَمِّرُ كُلَّ
شَيْءٍ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا لَا يُرَىٰ إِلَّا مَسَاكِنُهُمْ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿25﴾ وَلَقَدْ
مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِيمَا إِن مَّكَّنَّاكُمْ فِيهِ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ سَمْعًا وَأَبْصَارًا وَأَفْئِدَةً فَمَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ
سَمْعُهُمْ وَلَا أَبْصَارُهُمْ وَلَا أَفْئِدَتُهُم مِّن شَيْءٍ إِذْ كَانُوا يَجْحَدُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَحَاقَ
بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿26﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْقُرَىٰ وَصَرَّفْنَا الْآيَاتِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿27﴾ فَلَوْلَا نَصَرَهُمُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ قُرْبَانًا آلِهَةً بَلْ ضَلُّوا
عَنْهُمْ وَذَٰلِكَ إِفْكُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿28﴾

(21) Call to mind the brother of the Ād when he warned his people at "Ahqāf" whereas warners had already passed before him and after him (telling people) "Do not worship anyone besides Allāh. Verily I fear the punishment of a terrible day for you." (22) They said "Have you come to us to turn us away from our gods? Bring upon us what you warn us about, if you are truthful." (23) He said, "Knowledge is only with Allāh and I merely convey to you what I have been sent with. However, I notice that you are an ignorant nation." (24) When they observed it as a cloud approaching their valleys they exclaimed, "This is a

cloud that will bring us rain." Rather, it was the thing they sought to hasten; a fierce wind bearing a painful punishment. (25) It demolished everything by the command of its Lord and it transpired that only their homes could be seen. Thus do We punish the sinful nation. (26) We granted them powers that We never gave you people and We gave them ears, eyes and hearts. However, their ears, eyes and hearts were of no benefit to them at all because they rejected Allāh's verses; and the mockery they made encompassed them. (27) We have destroyed the towns around you and clearly expounded the signs so that they return. (28) So why were they not helped by those whom they took as a means of gaining proximity (to Allāh) and whom they regarded as their gods? These will be lost to them. This is merely their lie and fabrication.

THE NATION OF ĀD ARE DESTROYED AFTER THEY REJECTED THE MESSAGE OF SAYYIDINA HŪD عليه السلام

"Call to mind the brother of the Ād..." Allāh reminds the Muslims about Sayyidina Hūd عليهم السلام who is referred to as *"the brother of the* Ād" because he was from among them. The Arabic word *"Ahqāf"* is the plural of *"hiqf"* and refers to the large sand dunes of Yemen where the nation of Ād resided. These are circular in shape and are practically ground level at the base. Because sand cannot remain fixed at one place, these dunes keep shifting.

Allāh says that Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام *"warned his people at "Ahqāf" (that they should worship Allāh and abstain from polytheism) whereas warners had already passed before him and after him (telling people) 'Do not worship anyone besides Allāh. Verily I fear the punishment of a terrible day for you."*

In response to his message, the people said, *"Have you come to us to turn us away from our gods?* (And if you say that we will suffer punishment for rejecting your message then) *Bring upon us what you warn us about, if you are truthful."* They challenged Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام to bring Allāh's punishment on them.

In reply to their challenge Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام said to them, *"Knowledge is only with Allāh* (i.e. only Allāh knows which nation is to be punished and at what time) *and I merely convey to you what I have been sent with."* i.e. I am entrusted with the task of conveying the message to you and I have no ability to afflict punishment. Noticing their aversion, he told them, *"However, I notice that you are an ignorant nation."*

The people of Ād were experiencing tremendous heat and were forced to leave their homes for cooler areas in the valley. As they all gathered there, they noticed a cloud approaching. They shouted out, *"This is a cloud that will bring us rain."* Allāh says that it was no ordinary cloud but *"Rather, it was the thing (punishment) they sought to hasten; a fierce wind bearing a painful punishment."*

Allāh says in Surah Hāqqa, *"As for the Ād, they were destroyed by an icy tempest. Allāh unleashed it upon them for seven consecutive nights and eight consecutive days. You would have seen them lying flat on the ground as if they were hollow palm trunks. Do you see any of them surviving?"* [*Surah 69, verses 6-8*]

Allāh says in Surah Dhāriyāt, *"And (there is also a lesson) in (the story) of the Ād when we sent a wind to them that was devoid of any good. it reduced everything it*

passed to smithereens." [*Surah 51, verses 41,42*]

Allāh continues in Surah Ahqāf saying that the wind *"demolished everything by the command of its Lord and it transpired that only their homes could be seen. Thus do We punish the sinful nation."*

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that whenever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم saw a dark cloud in the sky, he would grow pale and would uneasily walk to and from the house. This anxiety would disappear only after the rains started to fall. When Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about this he replied, "O Ayshah! I fear that the situation should not be like that of the Ād who said, *'This is cloud that will bring us rain'* when they saw the cloud approaching their valleys. *'Rather, it was the thing they sought to hasten; a fierce wind bearing a painful punishment.* [*Muslim v.1 p.294 and 495*]

After recounting the incident of the Ād, Allāh addresses the people of Makkah saying, *"We granted them* (the Ād) *powers that We never gave you people and We gave them ears, eyes and hearts."*

Allāh blessed the Ād with great physical strength and wealth. However, when Allāh' s punishment afflicted them, nothing could save them. Allāh did not deprive them of their senses, but they abused these. Allāh says further, *"However, their ears, eyes and hearts were of no benefit to them at all because they rejected Allāh's verses..."*

When an adversity afflicts a person in this world, he is able to utilise his senses and intelligence to alleviate the adversity to some degree. However, once Allāh's punishment afflicts a person because he rejects Allāh's verses, these faculties become useless to him. In addition to this, Allāh says that the evil consequences of *"the mockery they made encompassed them."* They will have to suffer the punishment they earned for mocking Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام and jeering at him to bring Allāh's punishment on them.

Addressing the Makkans further Allāh says, *"We have destroyed the towns around you and clearly expounded the signs so that they return."* Allāh refers to the destroyed cities of the Ād that lay in Yemen to the south of Makkah and the ruins of the Thamud that lie in Shām to the north of Makkah. When the Makkans travelled for trade to Shām, they passed the ruins of the Thamud and the destroyed cities of Sayyidina Lūt's عليه السلام nation. It was therefore required that they take a lesson from this.

However, the polytheists of Makkah did not heed these lessons and adamantly adhered to disbelief and polytheism. As a result, they were also destroyed when Allāh's punishment struck. When Allāh's punishment did overtake them, they received no assistance from the gods that they took as patrons and intercessors. The help that they claimed these gods would offer was a mere lie and figment of their imagination. In this regard Allāh says, *"So why were they not helped by those whom they took as a means of gaining proximity (to Allāh) and whom they regarded as their gods? These will be lost to them. This is merely their lie and fabrication."*

وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَآ إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوٓا۟ أَنصِتُوا۟ ۖ فَلَمَّا قُضِىَ وَلَّوْا۟ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِم مُّنذِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰقَوْمَنَآ إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَٰبًا أُنزِلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِىٓ إِلَى ٱلْحَقِّ وَإِلَىٰ طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ يَٰقَوْمَنَآ أَجِيبُوا۟ دَاعِىَ ٱللَّهِ وَءَامِنُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَغْفِرْ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرْكُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾ وَمَن لَّا يُجِبْ دَاعِىَ ٱللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ بِمُعْجِزٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَيْسَ لَهُۥ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءُ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَلَمْ يَعْىَ بِخَلْقِهِنَّ بِقَٰدِرٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يُحْۦِىَ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۚ بَلَىٰٓ إِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ أَلَيْسَ هَٰذَا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّنَا ۚ قَالَ فَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

(29) When We turned a group of the Jinn towards you, they attentively listened to the Qur'ān. When they presented themselves to listen they said, "Be silent." When the recitation was complete, they returned to their people as warners. (30) They said, "O our people! We have heard a book that was revealed after Mūsa which confirms what was before it and guides towards the truth and towards the straight path." (31) "O our people! Respond to Allāh 's caller and believe in him; Allāh will forgive your sins and save you from a painful punishment." (32) "Whoever does not respond to Allāh's caller cannot escape on earth and has no protecting friend besides Allāh. Such people are in manifest deviation." (33) Do they not see that Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth and did not tire from creating them has the power to give life to the dead? Certainly! Allāh has power over all things. (34) The day when the disbelievers will be presented to the Fire (they will be asked), "Is this not the truth?" They will reply, "Certainly, by the oath of our Lord!" Allāh will say, "So taste the punishment because you used to disbelieve."

THE JINN HEAR THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم RECITE THE QUR'ĀN AND THEN RETURN TO INVITE THEIR PEOPLE TOWARDS ISLĀM

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's messenger to man and Jinn alike. These verses of Surah Ahqāf as well as verses 1 to 19 of Surah Jinn (Surah 72) both make mention of how the Jinn listened to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recite the Qur'ān. Scholars have recorded that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم met with the Jinn in their own settlement and elucidated the injunctions of Islām to them. In the terminology of the Muhaddithīn, the incident is referred to as "Laylatul Jinn". They mention that "Laylatul Jinn" took place approximately six times.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.4 p.174*) mentions that Allāh commanded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to propagate Islām to the Jinn and to recite the Qur'ān to them. Allāh then sent a group of Jinn from the city of Nineveh to the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه accompanied the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he went to meet with the Jinn. The incident took place before the Hijrah to Madinah.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the two of them approached the valley of Hajūn (which is the old name for the area of Makkah called Ma' la). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم drew a line on the ground and instructed Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه not to advance further than the line until he returned. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم proceeded ahead and recited the Qur'ān to an assembly of creatures that resembled donkeys. He also heard various types of deafening sounds which caused him to fear for the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم life. The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم voice then faded and all the Jinn disappeared like fragments of cloud.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned after Fajr, he asked Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه whether he had fallen asleep. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه replied, "How could I sleep when I feared for your life? The thought kept occurring to me to call some people to find out what was happening to you." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him, "If you had moved from your spot one of them may have snatched you away. Did you see anything?"

"Yes," replied Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه, "I saw some black men dressed in white. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Those were the Jinn of the city Nasībīn. They came to ask me to allocate something as food for them so I allocated bones and the droppings of horses, animals, cows, etc for them." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه asked, "How will these things be of benefit to them?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Whenever they find a bone, they will have that much meat which was on that particular bone the day the meat was removed. In place of whatever droppings they find they will receive the equivalent amount of grain that the animal may have eaten (and has been changed into excrement)."

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه asked, "What were the deafening sounds that I heard?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "A murder took place among the Jinn and they were pinning the blame on each other. They wanted me to resolve the issue, which I did with perfect justice."

According to another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم allocated bones as food for the Jinn and the droppings of animals as food for their animals. This is one of the reasons why man is prohibited from using bones and animal droppings for "Istinjā" (purifying oneself after passing urine or stool).

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه has also related that a few Sahabah *(prophet's campanions)* رضى الله عنهم and he met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم emerging from the cave of Hira on the morning that followed a "Laylatul Jinn". He said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "We searched for you the entire night but could not find you. We spent the entire night in the search because we were very worried." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "A caller from the Jinn came for me so I went with him and recited the Qur'ān to them."

Allāh says, *"When they (the Jinn) presented themselves to listen they said, 'Be silent.' When the recitation was complete, they returned to their people as warners. They said, 'O our people! We have heard a book that was revealed after Mūsa which confirms what was before it and guides towards the truth and towards the straight path.'"* This text makes it clear that the delegation of Jinn speaking were formerly Jews.

They further addressed their people saying, *"O our people! Respond to Allāh 's caller and believe in him; Allāh will forgive your sins and save you from a painful punishment."* This verse explains that the believers from among the Jinn will be rewarded with forgiveness and salvation from Hell. It does not state that they will be admitted into Heaven. In fact, no. verse of the Qur'ān and no hadith makes it clear that the believers Jinn will enter Heaven. It is for this reason that the Scholars differ on the issue. While some of them are of the opinion that the believers Jinn will be admitted into Heaven, others say that the only reward they will receive for belief will be salvation from Hell, where after they will be turned into dust like the animals. Sayyidina lmām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه has chosen not to make any decisive comment on the issue. (Further details will follow in Surah Rahmān, Insha Allāh).

They further. advised their people: *"Whoever does not respond to Allāh's caller (shall be inviting Allāh's punishment and) cannot escape on earth and has no protecting friend besides Allāh. Such people are in manifest deviation."* Whereas this statement appears to be part of the Jinn's address, it may also be interpreted as an independent statement made by Allāh.

Since people who refute Allāh do not even believe in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, Allāh proceeds to make mention of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Allāh says, *"Do they not see that Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth and did not tire from creating them has the power to give life to the dead? Certainly! Allāh has power over all things."* This verse prompts the disbelievers to ponder about the fact that since Allāh was Able to create gigantic phenomena like the heavens and the earth without experiencing the least fatigue, how can one possibly imagine that mere resurrection will prove impossible for Him? If the matter is given due consideration, a person will be forced to admit that *"Allāh has power over all things."*

Allāh continues, *"The day when the disbelievers will be presented to the Fire (they will be asked), 'Is this not the truth?'"* This question will be posed to them because they denied the existence of Hell while living in the world and used to jeer at those who used to inform them of the reality of the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. *"They will reply, 'Certainly, by the oath of our Lord (this is a certainty)!'"* However, their acceptance will now be futile. *"Allāh will say, 'So taste the punishment because you used to disbelieve.'"*

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُوا الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِل لَّهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّن نَّهَارٍ بَلَاغٌ فَهَلْ يُهْلَكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(35) Exercise patience like how the resolute ones among the messengers

exercised patience and do not be hasty regarding them. The day when they will be shown what they had been promised, it will seem to them that they had not even lived a moment of a single day. This is a message. It will be only the sinful nation who will be destroyed.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS ENCOURAGED TO EXERCISE PATIENCE

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exerted himself greatly to convey the message of Islām to the masses. However, there were many people who behaved obstinately and refused to yield. Their behaviour hurt the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and caused him much grief. Allāh consoles him by saying, *"Exercise patience like how the resolute ones among the messengers exercised patience and do not be hasty regarding them* (that they should be punished). *The day when they will be shown what they had been promised, it will seem to them that they had not even lived for a moment of a single day."*

When the disbelievers are not punished in this world they say that it seems that they will not be punished. However, when they witness the extreme punishment in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* they will forget all the pleasures of this world and it will seem to them that they only spent a few moments in this world.

"This is a message." Some commentators have interpreted this sentence to mean that the verses of the Qur'ān conveyed thus far are sufficient as advice and warnings for man. Other commentators say that *"This"* refers to the Qur'ān i.e. *"This Qur'ān is a message."* This means that the Qur'ān contains the message of truth and informs man about acts that will earn him tremendous rewards and about sins that he should abstain from. The Qur'ān has therefore conveyed its message to man. Man now has the choice to act upon the advice of the Qur'ān and be saved from eternal punishment.

"It will be only the sinful nation who will be destroyed." The disobedient ones earn their own destruction by rebelling against Allāh's orders.

NOTE: *"Exercise patience like how the resolute ones among the messengers exercised patience."* While some commentators have mentioned that the verse refers to a specific group of Prophets عليهم السلام only, others maintain that all the Prophets عليهم السلام were equally resolute and steadfast. When it is assumed that only a limited number of Prophets عليهم السلام were resolute as described in the verse, it will be deemed necessary to name them. Consequently, some commentators have named all the Prophets عليهم السلام except Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام because he behaved hastily when he left his nation without waiting for Allāh's command. In verse 48 of Surah Qalam (*Surah 68*), Allāh has commanded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to be like Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام.

Other commentators have stated that the *"resolute"* Prophets عليهم السلام were the eighteen Prophets عليهم السلام mentioned in verses 83 to 86 of Surah An'ām (*Surah 6*). With regard to these Prophets عليهم السلام, Allāh instructs, *"These are those*

people whom Allāh has guided, so follow their guidance." [*Surah An'ām, verse 90*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the *"resolute"* Prophets عليهم السلام were those who were granted their own Shariah. These were Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

سورة محمد

Madinan	Surah Muhammad	Verses 38

ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿١﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ
وَءَامَنُوا۟ بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَىٰ مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ ﴿٢﴾ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلْبَٰطِلَ وَأَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلْحَقَّ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ
لِلنَّاسِ أَمْثَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٣﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Allāh will destroy the deeds of those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from His path. (2) As for those who have faith, do righteous deeds and believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, which is the truth from their Lord, Allāh will expiate their sins and rectify their situation. (3) This is because the disbelievers follow falsehood and the believers follow the truth from their Lord. In this manner does Allāh relate for people their parables.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THOSE WHO PREVENT OTHERS FROM ALLĀH'S PATH AND THE REWARD FOR THE BELIEVERS

The above verses draw a clear distinction between the believers and the disbelievers. Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"Allāh will destroy the deeds of those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from His path."* Even though the disbelievers may carry out many good deeds and render great services to mankind, these deeds will not be recognised on the Day of Judgment on account of their disbelief.

Another factor that contributes to the destruction of their deeds is that they forbid others from following the path that Allāh has set out for man.

Allāh then speaks about the believers when He says, *"As for those who have faith, do righteous deeds and believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم*, which is the truth from their Lord, Allāh will expiate their sins and rectify their situation."* This verse defines Imān *(Belief)* as belief in "what has been revealed to

Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم". This makes it evident that after the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, no person can have belief without believing in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh also attests to the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the truth of his teachings by declaring that everything he preaches to people *"is the truth from their Lord* . Thereafter Allāh explains that the good fortune of the believers and ill-fortune of the disbelievers occur because *"the disbelievers follow falsehood and the believers follow the truth from their* Lord." In this verse, Allāh mentions that the truth is *'from their Lord" to* indicate that the truth can proceed only from Him.

"In this manner does Allāh relate for people their parables." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that *"their parables"* refers to the condition and situation of people. Allāh discusses the conditions of the Believers and the disbelievers, making it clear that the believers follow the truth and will attain salvation. On the contrary, the disbelievers will suffer a tremendous loss as a result of their disbelief.

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَضَرْبَ ٱلرِّقَابِ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَثْخَنتُمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّوا۟ ٱلْوَثَاقَ فَإِمَّا مَنًّۢا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَآءً
حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ ٱلْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ذَٰلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ لَٱنتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَا۟ بَعْضَكُم بِبَعْضٍ
وَٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَلَن يُضِلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿4﴾ سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ﴿5﴾ وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةَ
عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ ﴿6﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تَنصُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿7﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ فَتَعْسًا لَّهُمْ وَأَضَلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿8﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا۟ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ
﴿9﴾ ۞ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ دَمَّرَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَمْثَٰلُهَا ﴿10﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَوْلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَأَنَّ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿11﴾ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ وَٱلنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ﴿12﴾ وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ هِىَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً
مِّن قَرْيَتِكَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَخْرَجَتْكَ أَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ فَلَا نَاصِرَ لَهُمْ ﴿13﴾ أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ
كَمَن زُيِّنَ لَهُۥ سُوٓءُ عَمَلِهِۦ وَٱتَّبَعُوٓا۟ أَهْوَآءَهُم ﴿14﴾

(4) When you confront the disbelievers in battle then strike their necks. Eventually, when you have slain them, then fasten a tight bond. Thereafter, it is either unconditional freedom or ransom until the war lays down her burdens. This is it. If Allāh willed, He could have exacted revenge from them, but this is to test some of you with others. The deeds of those who are martyred in Allāh's way shall never be destroyed. (5) Allāh shall shortly convey them to their destination, rectify their affairs... (6) ...and admit them into Heaven (Jannah)

which He has introduced to them. (7) O you who believe! If you will assist Allāh, Allāh shall assist you and make you steadfast. (8) Destruction be for those who disbelieve and Allāh shall destroy their deeds. (9) This is because they dislike what Allāh revealed, because of which He lays their deeds to waste. (10) Have they not travelled on earth and seen what was the outcome of those before them? Allāh annihilated them and the disbelievers shall have the same. (11) This is because Allāh is the Protecting Friend of the believers and because the disbelievers have no protecting friend. (12) Allāh shall certainly admit those who believe and carry out good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. As for the disbelievers, they enjoy themselves and eat like the animals eat. The Fire shall be their abode. (13) Many were the towns that were more powerful than your town which drove you out. We destroyed them and they had none to assist them. (14) Can the one who is steadfast on a proof from his Lord be like those whose evil deeds have been beautified for them and who follow their whims?

FIGHTING IN JIHĀD, THE LAWS REGARDING PRISONERS OF WAR AND THE VIRTUE OF MARTYRS

In the above verses, Allāh instructs the Muslims that they should fight in earnest when confronting the enemy in Jihād. Allāh also instructs that those enemy soldiers who are not killed in the battle should be taken as prisoners and guarded well. Thereafter, the Muslims may either release the prisoners unconditionally, exchange them for Muslim prisoners, or demand a ransom for their release. The decision rests with the Amīr-ul-Mu'minīn ī. Muslims therefore have the following five choices in dealing with disbelievers prisoners of war:

1. Release them unconditionally.
2. Exchange them, for Muslim prisoners of war being held by the disbelievers.
3. Release them in exchange for monetary ransom (as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did after the Battle of Badr).
4. Execute them.
5. Distribute them among the Muislim soldiers as slaves.

The details of the third and fourth options have been discussed in the commentary of Surah Anfāl When the prisoners of war are made slaves, they will then reside in the Muslim country under the protection of the Islāmic state.

Sayyidina lmām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that it is not permissible to release disbelievers prisoners of war totally unconditionally i.e. without an exchange of prisoners or without a monetary ransom. In this regard, lmām Jassās رحمة الله عليه has written in "Ahkāmul Qur'ān" that Surah Barā'ah (*Surah* 9) was revealed after Surah Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. He states the options of unconditional release and release on ransom have been repealed by verses of Surah Barā'ah like *"Fight the polytheists wherever you find them"* [*verse* 5] *and "Fight those who do not believe in Allāh and the Last Day"* [*verse* 29].

Whereas Sayyidina lmām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه does not permit the unconditional release of disbelievers prisoners of war, his two prominent students lmām Muhammad and Abu Yusuf رحمة الله عليه permit it. lmām Shāfi'ī رحمة الله عليه has also permitted this. Although the Hanafi school of jurisprudence does not permit the ransoming of disbelievers prisoners of war, lmām Muhammad رحمة الله عليه writes in "Siyar Kabīr" that this would be permitted if the Muslims are in need of the ransom money.

Allāh says, *"If Allāh willed He could have exacted revenge from them..."* i.e. Allāh could have punished the disbelievers in a way other than having them suffer death and captivity at the hands of the Muslims. However, Allāh has commanded the believers to fight in Jihād *"to test some of you with others." i.e.* to test whether the believers will actually risk their lives to confront the disbelievers in open battle. Jihād is also a test for the disbelievers because it provides the opportunity for them to realise the truth of Islām when they witness the ways in which Allāh assists the Muslims from unseen sources. They are then afforded the opportunity to accept Islām.

Allāh says further, *"The deeds of those who are martyred in Allāh 's way shall never be destroyed."* This verse assures the Muslims that martyrdom not only signifies success in their test, but it will also accrue to them tremendous rewards for every deed. Furthermore, *"Allāh shall shortly convey them to their destination, rectify their affairs and admit them into Heaven which He has introduced to them."* Allāh will ensure that all the affairs of these people are to their liking in the grave, on the Plain of Resurrection, and in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).* Allāh has already introduced Heaven to the believers by means of his scriptures and the Prophets عليهم السلام. Another interpretation of this verse is that Allāh will make people recognise their abodes in Heaven even better than they were acquainted with their abodes in this world (as reported in a hadith).

Allāh then proclaims His assistance to the Muslims when He says, *"O you who believe! If you will assist Allāh* (i.e. assist in propagating Islām), *Allāh shall assist you and make you steadfast."* Of course, Allāh needs no assistance from anyone.

After discussing the good fortune of the believers, Allāh proceeds to speak about the disbelievers. Allāh says, *"Destruction be for those who disbelieve and Allāh shall destroy their deeds."* They will suffer defeat at the hands of the believers and will also be doomed to suffer eternally in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter). "This (ill-fortune) is because they dislike what Allāh revealed, because of which He lays their deeds to waste."*

LEARNING LESSONS FROM TRAVELLING

Sounding a warning to the disbelievers who are beguiled by their wealth and prosperity, Allāh says, *"Have they not travelled on earth and seen what was the outcome of those before them? Allāh annihilated them and the disbelievers shall have the same."* Every disbeliever stands to face the same destruction in this world for their rejection. Of course, a far worse doom awaits them in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter).*

"This (salvation of the believers and destruction of the disbelievers) is because Allāh is the Protecting Friend of the believers and because the disbelievers have no

protecting friend."

THE REWARD OF THE BELIEVERS AND THE DOOM OF THE DISBELIEVERS

"Allāh shall certainly admit those who believe and carry out good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. As for the disbelievers, they enjoy themselves (in this world) and eat like the animals eat. The Fire shall be their abode." Because the disbelievers regard this world to be everything to them, they make every effort to accrue the pleasures of the world. Just like animals eat anywhere and eat as much as they please, the disbelievers do the same without any consideration of lawful and unlawful earnings.

This type of behaviour is clearly evident among the Western culture where man and woman foster intimate relationships without caring for marriage. Even those who do marry do not give a second thought to striking up an adulterous relationship with another person. Just like animals, they shamelessly fornicate in public, discarding every shred of modesty. Certain governments have even stooped to legalising homosexuality and lesbianism. In fulfilling his carnal passions, the disbeliever has stripped himself of all humane traits and adopted bestiality. This type of behaviour is now sweeping like wildfire through the Muslim masses.

Such people are not conscious of lawful *(Halāl)* and Unlawful food and earnings because they are engrossed in carnal enjoyment. Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"Enjoy your disbelief for a while! You will certainly be from the inmates of the Fire."* [*Surah 39, verse 8*]

A WARNING TO THE PEOPLE OF MAKKAH

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Many were the towns that were more powerful than your town which drove you out. (However, despite their power and might) We destroyed them and they had none to assist them."*

Allāh then portrays the stark difference between a believer and a disbeliever when He says, *"Can the one who is steadfast on a proof from his Lord be like those whose evil deeds have been beautified for them and who follow their whims?"* The two cannot be equal because of the unmistakable differences between them. Consequently, they will be treated differently in both worlds.

مَّثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَآ أَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن مَّآءٍ غَيْرِ ءَاسِنٍ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُۥ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَٰلِدٌ فِى ٱلنَّارِ وَسُقُوا۟ مَآءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَآءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

(15) The description of the Heaven (Jannah) that the people of Piety have been promised is that it contains rivers of water that never contaminate, rivers of milk the taste of which never spoils, rivers of wine that are extremely palatable to those who drink it and rivers of the purest honey. The people there shall also

have every type of fruit and forgiveness from their Lord. Can these people ever be like those who will abide forever in the Fire and are given boiling water to drink which tears their innards to shreds?

THE DELECTABLE DRINKS FOR THE PEOPLE OF HEAVEN COMPARED TO THE BOILING WATER GIVEN TO THE INMATES OF HELL

Like the foregoing verses, the above verse also discusses the blessings to be received by the righteous and the miserable condition that the disbelievers and sinners will find themselves in after death. Allāh describes the rivers of Heaven in the above verse when He says that Heaven *"contains rivers of water that never contaminate, rivers of milk the taste of which never spoils, rivers of wine that are extremely palatable to those who drink it and rivers of the purest honey."*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "Indeed, there are a hundred ranks in Heaven that Allāh has specially reserved for those who strive in His way. A distance equivalent to the span between the sky and the earth separates each of these ranks from the next. So, whenever you ask Allāh for Heaven, ask Him for Jannatul Firdous (*Paradise of Heaven*) because it enjoys the best and most elevated position of Heaven. Only the throne of Rahmān lies above it and all the rivers of Heaven find their source in it." [*Bukhari p. 391*]

A similar narration reported by Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضی اللہ عنہ states: "All four rivers of Heaven find their source in it." Mulla Ali Qāri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has stated in his commentary of "Mishkāt" that these four rivers are the four mentioned in the above verse viz, rivers of water, milk, wine and honey. This hadith makes it clear that all these rivers have their source in Jannatul Firdous, from where the tributaries flow to the other parts of Heaven.

This verse describes the river of wine as being *"extremely palatable to those who drink it"*. Allāh says in Surah Sāffāt, *"They will be presented with goblets filled with flowing wine which will be white and delicious for the drinkers. It will neither produce headaches, nor will they be intoxicated with it."* [*Surah 37, verses 45-47*]

Allāh also says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"Youngsters of eternal youth shall wait on them with goblets and jugs and glasses filled with flowing wine. Neither will they have headaches with it, nor will they be intoxicated."* These verses make it evident that the drinks of Heaven will be extremely delectable and will not produce any ill-effects like the wines of this world.

Thereafter, Allāh adds, *"The people there shall also have every type of fruit and forgiveness from their Lord. Can these people ever be like those who will abide forever in the Fire and are given boiling water to drink which tears their innards to shreds?"* Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "The people of Hell will suffer such severe hunger that this hunger alone would be as bad as any punishment they suffer in Hell. When they beg for food, they will be given "Darī" to eat, which will neither nourish their bodies nor satisfy their hunger. When they plead for food a second time, they will be given food that will get stuck in their throats and choke them. Frantically thinking of some manner to swallow the food, they will recall that they used to take something to

drink in this world to facilitate easy swallowing. When they will plead for something to drink, boiling water will be given to them in iron cups. When the cups will be brought to their mouths, it will scald their faces and when they drink the water, it will tear their innards to shreds." [*"Mishkāt" p. 504, from Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina 'Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made the following comment regarding the verse *"Before him is Hell and he will be given puss as water to drink. He will drink it in sips and it will not go down his throat."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When the puss will be brought to the person's mouth, he will abhor it. When it will be brought even closer, it will scorch his face. When he drinks it, his intestines will be ripped apart and emerge from his anus." Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the following two verses viz.

"...are given boiling water to drink, which tears their innards to shreds?" (Surah Muhammad, verse 15)

"If they seek assistance, they will be assisted with water like molten metal that will scorch their faces. The worst of drinks!" (Surah Kahf (18), verse 29) ["Mishkāt" p. 503]

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا خَرَجُوا۟ مِنْ عِندِكَ قَالُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ ءَانِفًا ۚ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ طَبَعَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَٱتَّبَعُوٓا۟ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ﴿16﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱهْتَدَوْا۟ زَادَهُمْ هُدًى
وَءَاتَىٰهُمْ تَقْوَىٰهُمْ ﴿17﴾ فَهَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا ٱلسَّاعَةَ أَن تَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً ۖ فَقَدْ جَآءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا ۚ فَأَنَّىٰ لَهُمْ
إِذَا جَآءَتْهُمْ ذِكْرَىٰهُمْ ﴿18﴾ فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنۢبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَىٰكُمْ ﴿19﴾

(16) There are those people who listen to you intently until they depart from your presence and then say to those who have been granted knowledge, "What has he said just now?" These are the ones on whose hearts Allāh has set a seal and who follow their whims. (17) As for those who are rightly guided, Allāh shall increase their guidance and grant them their Piety. (18) They now only seem to await Judgment day to come to them suddenly. Undoubtedly, its signs have already arrived. How will they be reminded when Judgment day does dawn on them? (19) Know well that none is worthy of worship besides Allāh and seek forgiveness for your shortcomings and for the believing men and women. Allāh has knowledge of your movements and your places of rest.

THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE HYPOCRITES AND THE SEAL UPON THEIR HEARTS

The hypocrites were disbelievers who feigned being Muslims. Their hypocrisy was evident from their deeds and behaviour. One of their practices was that they attended the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم gatherings and pretended to listen very attentively. However, their attention was elsewhere and they did not comprehend what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said. They merely sat there

to fool others. When the gathering was over, they then met the learned Sahabah (*prophet's campanions*) رضى الله عنهم and asked them what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had mentioned.

Their first act of hypocrisy was to feign concentration during the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sermons. The second act of hypocrisy was to pretend that they were concerned about what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to say. Allāh says about them, *"These are the ones on whose hearts Allāh has set a seal and who follow their whims."*

Allāh then talks about the believers when He says, *"As for those who are rightly guided, Allāh shall increase their guidance* (because they believe and practise every new injunction) *and grant them their Piety"* i.e. Allāh will grant them the ability to act on all His commands and to abstain from everything that He has forbidden them from doing.

Allāh then rebukes the disbelievers for their attitude towards the truth when He says about them, *"They now only seem to await Judgment day to come to them suddenly."* i.e. They neither accept Islām, nor carry out good deeds. They are unaffected by the warnings of punishment and refuse to believe in the tidings of Heaven. All that seems left to convince them is Judgment day itself. With regard to Judgment day, Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, its signs have already arrived."* The advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in itself a sign to denote the closeness Judgment of day. Another sign was the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم miracle of splitting the moon as referred to in the first verse of Surah Qamar (Surah 54) where Allāh says, *"Judgment day has drawn near and the moon has been split."*

However, when Judgment day does eventually take place, it will be too late for people to believe because belief will be unacceptable then. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"How will they be reminded when Judgment day does dawn on them?"* Allāh says in Surah Fajr, *"The day when Hell will be brought to the fore. On that day man will understand. But of what use will this understanding be?"* [*Surah 89, verse 23*]

ENCOURAGEMENT TO SEEK FORGIVENESS

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Know well that none is worthy of worship besides Allāh and seek forgiveness for your shortcomings and for the believing men and women."* This injunction is also addressed to the Muslim masses. Any erroneous act of The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that was not entirely becoming of the noble status of a Prophet is referred to as a "shortcoming" in the verse. Of course, every one of the Prophets عليهم السلام were innocent from sins but fell prey to human errors because they were human after all.

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was commanded to seek forgiveness even though he was innocent so that his Ummah could learn from him and follow suit. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Indeed, a form of contamination settles in my heart and I repent to Allāh a hundred times daily." Another narration states that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would repent a hundred times in each sitting.

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes further, "It is indeed Allāh's great benevolence to this Ummah that He has commanded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to seek forgiveness on their behalf. Allāh has made him an intercessor and has also promised to accept his intercession." [*v.4 p.183*]

"Allāh has knowledge of your movements and your places of rest." The following are a few interpretations of the verse:

v Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه *- Allāh has knowledge of your moving about and of the places you reside in.*

v Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه *– Allāh has knowledge of your movements in this world as well as of your resting place in the Ākhirah (hereafter).*

v Sayyidina Ikrima رحمة الله عليه *– Allāh has knowledge of you when you were in the wombs of your mothers and also after you have been born in to the world.*

v Ibn Kaysān رحمة الله عليه *– Allāh has knowledge of your tossing and turning in your beds and your ultimate resting place in the grave. Allāh knows best. ["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 4 p.183]*

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ ۖ فَإِذَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا ٱلْقِتَالُ ۙ رَأَيْتَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ ٱلْمَغْشِىِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۖ فَأَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٠﴾ طَاعَةٌ وَقَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ ۚ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ ٱلْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ صَدَقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ﴿٢١﴾ فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَن تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوٓا۟ أَرْحَامَكُمْ ﴿٢٢﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعْمَىٰٓ أَبْصَٰرَهُمْ ﴿٢٣﴾ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَآ ﴿٢٤﴾

(20) The believers say, "Why is a Surah not revealed?" Then when a Surah is revealed in which mention is made of fighting in Jihād, you will see those with a disease in their hearts looking at you with the look of a person who is overcome by the swoon of death. Their misfortune is still forthcoming. (21) Obedience and good words. Then when the command is ratified it will be best for them if they are true to Allāh. (22) It is just possible that if you are given authority, you would spread anarchy on earth and sever family ties. (23) These are the people whom Allāh has cursed, has deafened and made blind. (24) Do they not ponder over the Qur'ān or are there locks upon their hearts?

THE DISOBEDIENCE OF THE HYPOCRITES

The above verses describe the eagerness that the believers possessed for Jihād and the aversion that hypocrites had for it. Allāh says, *"The believers say,*

'Why is a Surah not revealed (with more commands from Allāh)?"' The true believers are eager to exert themselves further in fulfilling Allāh's commandments. The emotions of the hypocrites at this point is altogether different. Allāh says, *"Then when a Surah is revealed in which mention is made of fighting in Jihād, you will see those with a disease* (of hypocrisy) *in their hearts* (i.e. the Hypocrites) *looking at you with the look of a person who is overcome by the swoon of death."* The hypocrites detest Allāh's commandments because they regard them as a burden upon their shoulders.

The situation is more grave for them when Allāh commands Jihād because they will be forced to participate to maintain their guise as Muslims. In fact, their resentment is so profound that it is evident from their faces. The fact that the hypocrites are forced to participate in Jihād to maintain their guise is a punishment of its own. If any of them is then killed in the battle, the punishment is even worse. It is with regard to this that Allāh says, *"Their misfortune is still forthcoming."*

"Obedience and good words" i.e. instead of reacting adversely to Allāh's command, it would be best if the hypocrites accepted the command and verbally expressed their pleasure to conform. *"When the command* (to fight in Jihād) *is ratified it will be best for them if they are true to Allāh* (and prove the sincerity of their belief)."

"It is just possible that you are given authority, you would spread anarchy on earth and sever family ties." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the verse is addressed to the Hypocrites. Given the knowledge of their excessive love for the world and their aversion for Jihād, it can be expected of them to cause strife and anarchy on earth if they are ever allowed to rule over people. In fact, they are so decadent that they are not even able to maintain cordial relationships with their family members.

Another translation of the Arabic word "tawallaytum" (translated above as *"given authority")* is to be averse. According to this translation, the verse addresses the hypocrites thus: "Is it possible that just as you are averse to Jihād, you will also spread anarchy on earth and sever family ties?" The question is rhetorical because when Jihād is forsaken, evil doers soon gain the upper hand over society. Eventually, stability is lost and strife becomes the order of the day.

Allāh then says that the Hypocrites *"are the people whom Allāh has cursed* (cast far from His mercy), *has deafened and made blind."* Bereft of the faculty of listening to the truth and recognising it, they cannot be expected to tread the straight path.

THE NECESSITY OF PONDERING OVER THE QUR'ĀN

Allāh asks, *"Do they not ponder over the Qur'ān or are there locks upon their hearts?"* This verse reproaches the hypocrites for not thinking deeply about the advice of the Qur'ān. If they make the effort to deliberate over the Qur'ān, they would never remain hypocrites and would never do what they do. However, their hearts appear to be locked and inaccessible to positive thinking.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ارْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهِم مِّن بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَى ۙ الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ
وَأَمْلَىٰ لَهُمْ (25) ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ سَنُطِيعُكُمْ
فِي بَعْضِ الْأَمْرِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ (26) فَكَيْفَ إِذَا تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ
وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ (27) ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ اتَّبَعُوا مَا أَسْخَطَ اللَّهَ وَكَرِهُوا
رِضْوَانَهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ (28)

(25) Indeed those who have turned their backs after guidance has been clarified for them, Satan has beautified (their sins) for them and prolonged their hopes. (26) This is because they say to those who detest Allāh's revelation, "We shall follow you in some matters." Allāh has knowledge of their secret talks. (27) What will be their condition when the angels shall claim their souls while smiting their faces and backs? (28) This is because they pursue the things that anger Allāh and they dislike His pleasure. So Allāh lays their deeds to waste.

SATAN /DEVIL BEGUILES THE APOSTATES

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه says that the above verses also refer to the hypocrites. They are unable to remain on the straight path because of their rebellious nature. Other commentators are of the opinion that the verses refer to the Ahlul Kitāb (*the people of Book*) because they turned their backs on the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم despite the fact that they recognised him from the description of their scriptures.

Before the advent of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, they used to tell others that they would be followers of the final messenger. The general words of the verse apply to both these groups equally.

Allāh says, *"Indeed those who have turned their backs after guidance has been clarified for them, Satan has beautified (their sins) for them and prolonged their hopes."* Satan makes them think that their ways are right and beautifies the material things of this world so that they are attracted to them and forget about Allāh. Satan also tells people that they still have long lives to lead in this world and that they will have to compromise the pleasures of this world if they were to accept Islām.

"This is because they say to those who detest Allāh's revelation, 'We shall follow you in some matters.'" Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله علیه interprets the verse to mean: "Satan beguiles the hypocrites and Jews because they say to the polytheists that they will join them in opposing the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and abstaining from assisting the Muslims in Jihād. It is this allegiance that they pledge to the polytheists that allows Satan the opportunity to beautify their deeds for them and to prolong their hopes." [*Qurtubi v.16 p.250*]

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" disagrees with this interpretation, but it seems the most appropriate interpretation in my humble opinion. The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" has interpreted the verse to mean that the hypocrites turn

their backs on Islām because they tell the Jews that they will secretly follow anything the Jews command them. However, to preserve their guise as Muslims, they will pretend to follow the commands of Islām. However, they fail to perceive that *"Allāh has knowledge of their secret talks."*

THE DISBELIEVERS ARE PUNISHED AT THE TIME OF THEIR DEATH

"What will be their condition when the angels shall claim their souls while smiting their faces and backs?" If the disbelievers are not punished in the world, they will be foolish to think that they have escaped punishment. Their real punishment will begin at the time of their death when the angels of death will beat them. They spend their lives escaping the call to Jihād, but will have to die some day. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that every sinful person will be beaten on the face and back at the time of death, but this cannot be perceived by onlookers just as the punishment of the grave cannot be sensed by the living.

Allāh says in Surah Anfāl, *"If only you could see how the angels claim the souls of the disbelievers, smiting their faces and backs saying, 'Taste the punishment of the Blaze! This is because of what your own hands have sent forward and surely Allāh is not oppressive to His bondsmen.'"* [*Surah 8, verses 50, 51*]

Allāh continues further, *"This* (punishment) *is because they pursue the things that anger Allāh* (disbelief, polytheism and sin) *and they dislike His pleasure* (i.e. accepting Islām). *So Allāh lays their deeds to waste."* Because of the disbelief and polytheism that they practise, all their deeds will be useless to them in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Besides the punishment at the time of death, they will continue to receive punishment forever.

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ أَن لَّن يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ (29) وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ
لَأَرَيْنَاكَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُم بِسِيمَاهُمْ ۚ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ
(30) وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَنَبْلُوَ أَخْبَارَكُمْ (31)

(29) Do those with a disease in their hearts think that Allāh will never expose their malice? (30) If We will, We would show them to you and you would recognize them by their features. You will surely recognise them by their manner of speech. Allāh has knowledge of their deeds. (31) We shall certainly test you until. We ascertain those of you who strive and those who are steadfast so that We may examine your deeds.

THE HYPOCRISY OF THE HYPOCRITES CAN BE DETERMINED FROM THEIR MANNER OF SPEECH

Although the hypocrites pretended to show solidarity with the Muslims, they harboured great against animosity and malice towards the Muslims. These ill feelings often surfaced, but they still adamantly proclaimed to be Muslims. They even swore oaths that they were Muslims and they lived among the

Muslims so that their true identities could be concealed. They even prided themselves for their ingenuity in disguising themselves. For a long period of time, Allāh did not expose their individual identities, but merely described the many traits and actions of the hypocrites. Details of this are mentioned in Surah Barā'ah (*Surah 9)*, on account of which Surah Barā'ah is referred to as "Fādiha i.e. "The Humiliater". Other Surahs also mention such details.

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Do those with a disease in their hearts think that Allāh will never expose their malice? If We will, We would show them to you (individually) and you would recognise them by their features. You will surely recognise them by their manner of speech."* The behaviour and speech of insincere persons can be clearly distinguished from that of sincere Muslims. They swear oaths unnecessarily, speak in a staggered manner and reply to questions after much thought and deliberation. The hypocrites were allowed to maintain their guise for a long time until the time came when they were eventually driven out of the Masjidun Nabawi in humiliation. The details of this can be had from the biography of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم written by Ibn Hishām رحمة الله عليه [*v.* 2].

"Allāh has knowledge of their deeds." Allāh has perfect knowledge of those believers who are sincere and those people who have hypocrisy lurking in their hearts. Although the hypocrites may have thought that they were able to fool the Muslims, they had no hope of concealing their identities from Allāh.

Allāh addresses the Muslims saying, *"We shall certainly test you (with commands like Jihād) until We ascertain those of you who strive and those who are steadfast so that We may examine your deeds."*

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَشَاقُّوا الرَّسُولَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ لَن
يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيُحْبِطُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَلَا تُبْطِلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٣﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ
مَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَن يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ﴿٣٤﴾ فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلْمِ وَأَنتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ
وَاللَّهُ مَعَكُمْ وَلَن يَتِرَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٥﴾

(32) Indeed those who disbelieve, forbid from Allāh's path and oppose the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم after guidance has been clarified for them cannot harm Allāh at all. Allāh will soon annul their deeds. (33) O you who believe! Obey Allāh, obey the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and do not invalidate your deeds. (34) Verily those who disbelieve, forbid from Allāh's path and then die as disbelievers, Allāh shall never forgive them. (35) So do not weaken, do not call for a truce and you will be dominant. Allāh is with you and will never devalue your deeds.

THE DISBELIEVERS CANNOT HARM ALLĀH IN THE LEAST AND ALL THEIR DEEDS WILL BE WASTED

Allāh declares, *"Indeed those who disbelieve, forbid from Allāh's path and oppose the messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم *after guidance has been clarified for them cannot harm Allāh at all."* In fact, they do harm to themselves by damning themselves to the eternal punishment of the Aakhirah (Hereafter). In addition to this, "Allāh will soon annul their deeds." Those deeds which would earn ample rewards for sincere believers will be useless to the disbelievers because of the absence of Belief.

"O you who believe! Obey Allāh, obey the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم *and do not invalidate your deeds."*

Deeds are invalidated by having doubts in one's Belief, by perpetrating disbelief and polytheism, as well as by carrying out certain major sins. These factors deprive one of the rewards of good deeds. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that ostentation and boasting cause one's deeds to be annulled. The general meaning of the verse includes all factors that contribute to cancelling the reward of good deeds.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه said, "We, the Sahabah (*prophet's campanions*) رضى الله عنهم, were under the impression that all good deeds are certainly accepted. When the verse *'O you who believe! Obey Allāh, obey the messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم *and do not invalidate your deeds'* was revealed, we thought, 'What could invalidate our deeds?' We later realised that major sins and immoral acts were implied. Thereafter, whenever we saw any person commit a major sin or an immoral act, we would say that the person is destroyed. Later, when Allāh revealed the verse *'Verily Allāh does not forgive that polytheism be committed, but may forgive all sins besides this for whom He wills,'* it became our practice that whenever someone committed a major sin, we would fear that he will be punished (i.e. we were never certain that he will be punished).

We also entertained hope that the person who did not commit any major sin would be forgiven." [*"Ruhul Ma'āni", v.26 p.79*]

Allāh further states, *"Verily those who disbelieve, forbid from Allāh's path and then die as disbelievers, Allāh shall never forgive them."* On the other hand, if a disbeliever opposed Islām, prevented others from Allāh' s Dīn and then repented by accepting Islām, all the wrongs he perpetrated as a disbeliever will be forgiven and he will be worthy of entering Heaven. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said to Sayyidina Amr bin Al Ās رضى الله عنه, "Don't you know that acceptance of Islām destroys everything before it?"

QADHĀ (*SAYING A PRAYER OR FAST AFTER DUE TIME*) IS COMPULSORY AFTER INVALIDATING NAFL SALĀH OR FASTS

According to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, a person will have to repeat any Optional Salāh or fasts if he unduly terminated them. Among the various proofs to substantiate this statement, the above verse is also cited. If a person started performing Salāh or fasting and then terminated the Salāh or fast before completing the act, he will be guilty of invalidating an act which had to be

completed. He will therefore be acting contrary to Allāh's clear instruction of *"do not invalidate your deeds."* The verse prohibits people from invalidating any act of worship, whether it be by means of terminating the act before completion or by means of invalidating it in any other way.

"DO NOT WEAKEN"

Allāh addresses the Muslims further when He states, *"So do not weaken, do not call for a truce..."* This verse enjoins Muslims to engage in Jihād against the disbelievers when the disbelievers prepare to attack them. They should never shy away from Jihād on the pretext of calling for a truce because this is a sure sign of weakness. Of course, if the disbelievers propose a peace treaty, the Muslims are at liberty to accept it if it is beneficial for them. Details of this have been mentioned in the commentary of verse 61 of Surah Anfāl where Allāh says, *"If they (the disbelievers) are inclined towards making peace, then you should also incline yourselves to it and trust in Allāh. Without doubt, He is All Hearing, All Knowing."*

Allāh then tells the Muslims, *"and you will be dominant."* Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Do not lose courage and do not be grieved for you shall be dominant if you are indeed believers."* This verse of Surah Āl Imrān stipulates the quality of belief as a condition for dominance. This means that the Muslims have to be imbued with the qualities of piety, love for the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, trustworthiness and have to abstain from sins if they want to remain in an authoritative position on earth. When they cease to be true believers with these qualities, the disbelievers will speedily gain the upper hand over them and assume authority. Of course, there are certain instances when the Muslims will be allowed to avoid Jihād for legitimate reasons. To understand this, one may refer to the commentary of the verse *"Now Allāh has lightened your burden and He knows that there is weakness within you."* [*Surah Anfāl (6), verse 66*]

Allāh then makes a promise to the believers saying, *"Allāh is with you..."* Therefore, the believers should fight the disbelievers in earnest because they have Allāh's support. They should press on in the Jihād campaigns having perfect trust in Allāh and with the intention of pleasing Him only. Verse 7 of this Surah stated, *"O you who believe! If you will assist Allāh* (i.e. Allāh's Dīn), *Allāh shall assist you and make you steadfast."*

Allāh also promises the believers: *"and (Allāh) will never devalue your deeds."* Allāh will grant a person the full reward due to him/her for a deed. Of course, the condition is that the person does not invalidate the deed in some way. The minimum reward that any good deed earns is ten fold. Allāh then increases the reward for whoever He wills. Allāh states in Surah Jinn, *"Whoever believes in his Lord has neither loss* (of reward) *nor oppression to fear* (i.e. he does not have to fear being punished for something he did not do)." [*Surah 72, verse 13*]

إِنَّمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَإِن تُؤْمِنُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ يُؤْتِكُمْ أُجُورَكُمْ وَلَا يَسْـَٔلْكُمْ
أَمْوَٰلَكُمْ ﴿٣٦﴾ إِن يَسْـَٔلْكُمُوهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ تَبْخَلُوا۟ وَيُخْرِجْ أَضْغَٰنَكُمْ ﴿٣٧﴾ هَٰٓأَنتُمْ

هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَمِنكُم مَّن يَبْخَلُ ۖ وَمَن يَبْخَلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخَلُ عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ ٱلْغَنِىُّ وَأَنتُمُ ٱلْفُقَرَآءُ ۚ وَإِن تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوٓا۟ أَمْثَٰلَكُم ﴿٣٨﴾

(36) The life of this world is mere play and amusement. If you believe and fear Allāh, He will grant you your rewards and will not ask for your wealth. (37) If Allāh had to ask you for your wealth and demand it from you, you would have become miserly and He would have exposed your heartfelt dissatisfaction. (38) Behold! You are the very ones who are summoned to spend in Allāh's way but there are those among you who are miserly. Those who are miserly practise miserliness to their own detriment. Allāh is Independent and you are all needy. If you turn away, He will substitute you with another nation who will not be like yourselves.

THE FUTILITY OF THIS WORLDLY LIFE AND THE HARMS OF MISERLINESS

In the above verses, Allāh advises the believers to spend their wealth for the cause of Dīn *(religion)*. Allāh first describes the reality of this world when He says, *"The life of this world is mere play and amusement."* Allāh makes a similar assertion in Surah Ankabūt when He says, *"The life of this world is mere futility and play. Without doubt, the life of the Ākhirah (Hereafter) is true life. If only they knew."* [*Surah 29, verse 64*]

Tangible objectives cannot be acquired through play and amusement. True pleasure and happiness can be had only in Heaven. It is therefore imperative for every person to exert himself/herself to attain success in the Ākhirah and escape falling prey to the temptations of this world.

Allāh further states, *"If you believe and fear Allāh* (by fulfilling His commands), *He will grant you your rewards and will not ask for your wealth."* Allama Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean that Allāh does not command man to spend all his wealth in Zakāh. According to another interpretation, it means that Allāh has commanded man to spend his wealth on himself as well, for which he will be rewarded. Yet another interpretation explains that the wealth of man is not actually his because Allāh has given everything to him. Therefore, when Allāh asks man to donate in charity, it is not man's wealth that Allāh asks for, but Allāh's. Therefore, man should be happy when Allāh asks him to spend in charity because Allāh is merely asking for what actually belongs to Him.

Although the verse mentions that Allāh will not ask a person for his wealth if he believes, it does not mean that people will be asked for their wealth if they do not believe. There is no question of Allāh commanding the disbelievers to spend in charity because Allāh has nothing to do with them. The disbelievers fear that they will be asked to spend their wealth upon accepting Islām, because people in the world sometimes ask others for money when they have struck a relationship with them.

Allāh then says, *"If Allāh had to ask you for your wealth and demand it from you, you would have become miserly and He would have exposed your heartfelt dissatisfaction."* If people were forced to spend their wealth, they would be naturally dissatisfied and would hold back their wealth. It is evident nowadays that some Muslims find it extremely difficult to spend even 2,5% of their wealth for Zakāh.

There are also many who will pay their Zakāh but make no effort to ensure that the Zakāh is calculated properly. As a result, they pay less than what is due from them.

"Behold! You are the very ones who are summoned to spend in Allāh's way but there are those among you who are miserly. Those who are miserly practise miserliness to their own detriment." By failing to spend in charity, a person deprives himself of the rewards to be accrued. By spending in worthy causes, a person benefits himself by attaining the everlasting rewards in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*, as well as an increase in blessings in this world.

"Allāh is Independent and you are all needy." Everything in the universe depends on Allāh for its existence and survival, while Allāh needs none. No person should ever think that s/he is benefiting Allāh in any way by spending in His path.

IF YOU TURN AWAY, ALLĀH WILL RAISE ANOTHER NATION

Allāh states, *"If you turn away* (from Islām), *He will substitute you with another nation who will not be like yourselves."* Allāh addresses the Muslims of every era, telling them never to think that Jihād, charity and the branches of Dīn *(religion)* are dependant on them or their nation. Allāh does not need anyone to do anything. Allāh is the Supreme Creator, the Master and Omnipotent. He may use whoever He wills for any task.

THE SERVICE THAT NON-ARAB NATIONS RENDERED TO ISLĀM

Tirmidhi reports a hadith in which the Sahabah (*prophet's companions*) رضى الله عنهم once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Who is the nation about whom Allāh says that He will substitute in our place if we turn away and who will not be like us?" Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه was present with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم at that time. In reply to the question, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم placed his hand on Sayyidina Salmān's رضى الله عنه shoulder (or thigh according to another narration) and said, "This person and his nation (the Persians)." Another report states that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "This man and his companions."

Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added, "I swear by the Being in Whose control lies my life! If belief was suspended from the Thurayya (Pleiades) constellation of stars, many Persians would acquire it." [*Tirmidhi in the Chapter concerning the commentary of Surah Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم]

It occurred that once the Arabs started neglecting the Dīn *(religion)*, Allāh raised many great men from Persia who rendered a tremendous service to Islām. Sayyidina lmām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه was one of these men, whose piety and knowledge is proverbial. One should also study the biography of lmām Bukhari

رحمة الله عليه, another son of Islām of Persian origin. Yet another is Imām Bukhari's رحمة الله عليه teacher, Sayyidina Makki bin Ibrahīm رحمة الله عليه, from whom Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه has narrated eleven "Thulāthiyāt"

Among a galaxy of Persian Muhaddithīn (scholars of Hadith) Hāfidh Dhahabi رحمة الله عليه has noted the following luminaries:

- *Abu Ubaid Qāsim bin Sallām Harawi* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Nu'aim bin Hammād Marwazi* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Is'hāq bin Ibrahīm Marwazi* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Zuhair bin Harb* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Qutaybah bin Sa'īd Balkhi* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Abu Ja'far, Muhammad bin Mahrān Rāzi* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Abu Zakariyya, Yahya bin Mūsa Balkhi Sajistāni* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Hāfidh Zakariyya bin Yahya Balkhi* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Imām Abu Zur'ah Rāzi* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Imām Abu Hātim Rāzi* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Imām Abu Dawūd* رحمة الله عليه *(compiler of Sunan Abu Dawūd).*
- *Sulaymān bin Ash'ath Sajistāni* رحمة الله عليه.
- *Imām Tirmidhi* رحمة الله عليه *(Compiler of Sunan Tirmidhi).*
- *Abu Abdillah, Muhammad bin Yazīd Qazwīni Ibn Majah* رحمة الله عليه *(the compiler of Sunan Ibn Majah).*
- *Imām Ahmad bin Shu'ayb An Nasa'ī* رحمة الله عليه *(compiler of Nasa'ī).*
- *Imām Abu Ja'far., Muhammad bin Jarīr Tabari* رحمة الله عليه *(renowned as Ibn Jarīr Tabari).*
- *Al Hāfidhul Kabīr, Muhammad bin Is'hāq bin Khuzayma Naysapūri* رحمة الله عليه
- *Hāfidh Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Yahya bin Minda Asbahāni* رحمة الله عليه
- *Imām Muslim* رحمة الله عليه *also hails from the Persian city of Naysapūr, although he is linked to the Arab tribe of Qushayr.*

There are many more names that can be traced in historical sources. Apart from the famous scholars mentioned above, Imām Jalāludīn Suyuti رحمة الله عليه has also cited the names of the following:

- *Hāfidh Abu Qāsim tabrāni* رحمة الله عليه *(compiler of the famous Ma'ājim).*
- *Hafidh Abu Hātim, Muhammad bin Hibbān* رحمة الله عليه
- *Ibnus Sunni, Abu Bakr Dīnuri* رحمة الله عليه
- *Hāfidh Abu Nu'aim Isbahāni* رحمة الله عليه
- *Imām Bayhaqi* رحمة الله عليه

The above are the names of only eminent Muhaddithīn of Persian origin. If a list has to be made of non-Arab scholars (not only Persian) serving the various other branches of Dīn *(religion)*, the list is endless. In the field of Qirā'ah, the names of Imām Abu Amr Dāni رحمة الله عليه, Imām Shātbi رحمة الله عليه and Imām Jazari رحمة الله عليه shine forth. The list on non-Arab Mufassirīn (commentators of the Qur'ān) and Fuqahā (*Muslim Jurists*) is also extensive. The scholars of Persia were also responsible for the propagation of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence. They are commonly referred to as "Scholars Mā Warāun Nahar" ("The Scholars from beyond the River").

One should also not forget the services that the Tatars (Tartars) and Turks rendered to Islām after becoming Muslims. The role that the Turks played in the Crusades is most notable. All non-Arab nations are implied in the verse *"He will substitute you with another nation."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cited the Persians by way of example.

سورة الفتح

Madinan	Surah Al-Fath	Verses 29

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا ﴿1﴾ لِّيَغْفِرَ لَكَ ٱللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنۢبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَٰطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا ﴿2﴾ وَيَنصُرَكَ ٱللَّهُ نَصْرًا عَزِيزًا ﴿3﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ ٱلسَّكِينَةَ فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوٓا۟ إِيمَٰنًا مَّعَ إِيمَٰنِهِمْ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿4﴾ لِّيُدْخِلَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَيُكَفِّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿5﴾ وَيُعَذِّبَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتِ وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَٱلْمُشْرِكَٰتِ ٱلظَّآنِّينَ بِٱللَّهِ ظَنَّ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۚ عَلَيْهِمْ دَآئِرَةُ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۖ وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿6﴾ وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿7﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Indeed, We have granted you a manifest victory... (2) So that Allāh may forgive you for those shortcomings that have passed and those that may occur in the future; and so that He may complete His favour on you, guide you on the straight path... (3) And (so that) Allāh may render you assistance that is most powerful. (4) It is He Who sends tranquility into the hearts of the believers so that their faith increases together with the faith they have. The armies of the heavens and the earth belong to Allāh and Allāh is Ever All Knowing, the Wise. (5) (Allāh has granted you a manifest victory) so that He may admit the believing men and women into gardens beneath which rivers flow. They will abide there forever and He shall pardon them for their sins. This is a great success in Allāh's sight. (6) (Allāh has granted you a manifest victory) so that Allāh may punish the hypocrite men and women as well as the polytheistic men and women, all of whom hold an evil opinion of Allāh. An evil calamity shall befall them, Allāh is angry with them, curses them and has prepared Hell for

them. What an evil place to return to! (7) The armies of the heavens and the earth belong to Allāh and Allāh is always the Mighty and Wise.

A CLEAR VICTORY AND THE PROMISES OF TREMENDOUS DIVINE ASSISTANCE AND FORGIVENESS

Surah Fatah makes mention of the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah and the Muslim conquest of Khaybar, after which it concludes with a beautiful description of the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم. The beginning of this Surah was revealed while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم were on a journey.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه narrates that after concluding the peace treaty at Hudaybiyyah, the Muslims were returning to Madinah in grief because they were unable to perform the Umrah they set out to perform. When the opening verses of Surah Fatah were revealed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم, "Such a verse has been revealed to me which is more beloved to me than the entire world." *The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *then recited the verse, 'indeed, We have granted you a manifest victory so that Allāh may forgive you for those shortcomings that have passed and those that may occur in the future."*

Thereupon, the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم said, "Congratulations to you, O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! We would like to know what will become of us." It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"That He may admit the believing men and women into gardens beneath which rivers flow..."* ["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.4 p.188, Bukhari v.2 p.600]

Sayyidina Zaid bin Aslam رحمة الله عليه reports from his father that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمwas once on a journey when Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه posed a question to him one night. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمdid not reply, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه repeated the question. However, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not reply even the second time, and neither when the question was repeated a third time.

Thereupon, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه said to himself, "May your mother forsake you! (It was customary for the Arabs to say this when they were in sorrow). You have placed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمin difficulty by repeating a question thrice, to which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمdid not reply." Rebuking himself thus, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه hastened his camel until it proceeded ahead of all the others, fearing that some verse of the Qur'ān may be revealed condemning his act. After a while, he heard someone calling, "O Umar! Present yourself before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم." Consequently, he came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمin fear that some verse must have been revealed concerning him. When he greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the latter said, "Such a Surah has been revealed to me that is more beloved to me than everything on which the sun rises." Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verses, *'Indeed, We have granted you a manifest victory..."* [*Bukhari p. 600 and 716*]

A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE TREATY OF HUDAYBIYYAH

The polytheists of Makkah harassed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the prophet's companion's رضى الله عنهم to the extent that they were forced to migrate to Madinah. In the month of Dhul Qa'dah of the 6th year after the Hijrah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left with the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم for Makkah to perform Umrah. He appointed Sayyidina Namīla bin Abdillah Laythi رضى الله عنه to be the Amīr of Madinah in his absence. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the residents of Madinah as well as those living in the nearby villages to accompany him. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم donned the Ihrām so that it may be understood that they intended to perform Umrah and had no intention to wage Jihād. They even took their sacrificial animals with them.

Upon reaching a place called Usfān, a person by the name of Bishr bin Sufyān met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and informed him that the Quraysh met at Dhu Tuwa and swore on oath that they would not permit his entry into Makkah. He also informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Khālid bin Walīd (who was then still a Polytheist) had already reached a place called Kurā'ul Ghamīm with a contingent of horsemen to resist the Muslims.

After hearing this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم changed course and travelled towards the right of their original course. Since this was not the conventional route, the terrain proved difficult because it was a series of rocky valleys. The route eventually led to the path to Hudaybiyyah. Hudaybiyyah lies between Makkah and Jeddah and forms the boundary of the Haram. The Muslims would not have passed by Hudaybiyyah if they took the conventional route from Usfān. However, it was necessary to alter course to avoid a skirmish with the Quraysh.

When the contingent of Quraysh horsemen received intelligence of the Muslims' new course, they returned to Makkah. In the meantime, the Muslims had already reached Hudaybiyyah. At Hudaybiyyah, the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم camel sat down. When the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم remarked that she was being stubborn, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم pointed out to them that she normally never behaved in this manner. He then added, "The Being that stopped the people of the elephants from entering Makkah has stopped her as well." Knowing well that the Quraysh were intent on resisting the Muslims' entry into Makkah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commented, "Today I will comply to any request that the Quraysh make if it can be done on the grounds of fostering family ties."

Water was very scarce at Hudaybiyyah. The prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم pointed out to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that there was no water for wudhu *(ablution)* and for drinking. All they had was the little water that was in the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم cup. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم placed his blessed fingers in the cup and water began gushing from between them. The narrator of this hadith Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه says that the water was sufficient for them to drink and to make wudhu (*ablution*). When he was asked how many they were, he replied, "We were 1500. Even if we were a hundred thousand, the water would have been enough for all."

Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضی اللہ عنہ narrates, "You people interpret the "*manifest victory*" (mentioned in the verse) as the conquest of Makkah whereas we regard it to be the pledge of Ridhwān that was taken at Hudaybiyyah. We numbered more than 1400 then. There was a little water in the well at Hudaybiyyah, all of which we drew for using until there was not even a drop left. When the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم learnt of this, he came to the well and sat on one edge of it. He then asked for a bucket of the drawn water to be brought to him. When this was done, he added some of his blessed saliva to the water (according to another narration, he made wudhu (*ablution*) and gargled his mouth). He then threw the water into the well and instructed the prophet's companions رضی اللہ عنہم to leave the well for while. After a while, when the prophet's companions رضی اللہ عنہم began to draw water from the well, there was sufficient water to quench the thirst of all the prophet's companions رضی اللہ عنہم and their animals."

There is no contradiction between the narrations of Sayyidina Jābir رضی اللہ عنہ and Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضی اللہ عنہ. While Sayyidina Barā رضی اللہ عنہ stated that they numbered more than 1400, Sayyidina Jābir رضی اللہ عنہ rounded the figure off to 1500. There is also no discrepancy between the incidents of the cup and the well because both are separate incidents that took place on that occasion.

While the Muslims camped at Hudaybiyyah, the Quraysh consecutively sent Budail bin Waraqa, Mukarraz bin Hafs, Halīs bin Alqama and Urwa bin Mas'ūd Thaqafi as envoys to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم made it clear to each one of them that they had come to perform Umrah and did not intend to fight.

THE LOVE AND SPIRIT OF SELF-SACRIFICE THAT THE PROPHET'S COMPANIONS رضی اللہ عنہم DISPLAYED TOWARDS THE HOLY PROPHET صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم

When Urwa bin Mas'ūd met the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, he was stunned to see the love and devotion that the prophet's companions رضی اللہ عنہم showed to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. They would not allow the water falling from his limbs to touch the ground when he made wudhu and would immediately scoop it up. They would also hasten to pick up any hair that fell from his head.

When addressing the Quraysh afterwards, Urwa bin Mas'ūd said, "I have been to the royal courts of Caesars, Kisra and Najashi . I have never seen the followers of any ruler so devoted to him as the followers of Muhammad صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم are to him. If you ever fight against him, they will never desert him. Consider well what you intend doing."

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم then told Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ to proceed to Makkah to convince the Quraysh that the Muslims did not intend to fight. Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ pointed out to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that the Quraysh recognised him as one of their greatest enemies and that there are none of his tribe, the Banu Adi, present in Makkah to offer him any protection. He suggested to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم saying, "Rather send Uthmān bin Affān رضی اللہ عنہ because the Quraysh respect him more than myself." Consequently, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم sent Sayyidina Uthmān رضی اللہ عنہ

as an envoy to the likes of Abu Sufyān and others to clarify the position of the Muslims. When Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه explained the matter to the Quraysh, they remained adamant that they would not allow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make Circumambulation of the Ka'ba. However, they told Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه that he was allowed to make Circumambulation while he was there. Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه remarked that he would not make Circumambulation without the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه was then detained in Makkah but the Muslims received news that he was assassinated.

THE PLEDGE OF RIDHWĀN

When the Muslims heard that Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه had been assassinated, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Muslims that now they would not return to Madinah without waging Jihād against the Quraysh because they had already created the atmosphere for war. It was then that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took a pledge of allegiance from each of the prophet's companion's رضى الله عنهم that they would fight with him to the end and never desert. Because of his absence, Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه was the only companion's رضى الله عنه that could not swear his allegiance. Therefore, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added his second hand to the solemnising of the pledge, stating that it represented the hand of Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه.

This pledge took place beneath a tree at Hudaybiyyah. It was with regard to this that Allāh revealed the verse, *"Allāh was well pleased with the believers when they pledged their allegiance to you beneath the tree."* It is for this reason that the pledge is called "Bay'atur Ridhwān" ("The Pledge of Ridhwān" - Ridhwān' meaning Allāh's pleasure). The prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم who took the pledge are referred to as "As'hābush Shajarah" ("The Companions of the Tree") because the pledge was taken beneath a tree.

Although the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم later learned that the news of Sayyidina Uthmān's رضى الله عنه assassination was false, they still earned the rewards from Allāh and were awarded the medal of Allāh's pleasure, as announced in the Qur'ān -an accolade that will be recited forever.

Thereafter, the Quraysh sent Suhayl bin Amr to negotiate a peace treaty with the Muslims. They gave him explicit instructions that the treaty should not permit the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entry into Makkah because the Arabs will then taunt them by saying that Muhammad صلى الله علية وسلم forced an entry into Makkah. Suhayl bin Amr entered into a lengthy discussion with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم until the clauses of the treaty were concluded.

THE CLAUSES OF THE TREATY OF HUDAYBIYYAH

Bukhari (*v.1 p.371,372*) and Muslim (*v.2 p.104*) report that Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه commenced writing the treaty with the words: 'This is what has been decided by Muhammad, the messenger of Allāh." Suhayl bin Amr and his companions objected to this saying, "We do not accept him as Allāh's messenger. If we did accept, why would we prevent him from performing Umrah? Rather write 'Muhammad, the son of Abdullāh."'

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I am Muhammad, the messenger of Allāh as well Muhammad, the son of Abdullāh." Then, addressing Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Erase the words 'the messenger of Allāh'." Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه replied, "I cannot erase this attribute of yours." This he said out of reverence and not disobedience. Thereafter, the treaty was commenced with the words, "This is what has been decided by Muhammad, the son of Abdullāh."

Muslim (*v.2 p.105*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه to begin the treaty with the words, "*Bismillahir Rahmānir Rahīm*" ("In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful"). Suhayl bin Amr objected to this by saying, "What is '*Bismillahir Rahmānir Rahīm*'? We do not acknowledge this. Rather write what we are familiar with i.e. '*Bismikallah Humma*' ('In Your name, O Allāh')." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم acceded to this request as well.

According to "Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" (*v.4 p.168*), the words of the treaty were as follows:

"This is what Muhammad, the son of Abdullāh has negotiated with Suhayl bin Amr. The two have negotiated on the following:

1. *No wars shall take place for a period of ten years. All shall live in peace and none shall attack the other.*
2. *Any person from the Quraysh who defects to Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *without the consent of his senior will have to be returned.*
3. *Any person from Muhammad's* صلى الله عليه وسلم *companions who defects to the Quraysh does not have to be returned.*
4. *There shall be a sealed bag between us (i.e. there will be no fighting between us. Other 'Scholars have explained this clause to mean that whatever has been concluded has been done so with a clear heart. Hearts are referred to as bags because they contain many secrets. A sealed bag will therefore denote a heart that will not exude deception.)*
5. *None shall physically steal nor hurt another with betrayal.*
6. *Whoever wishes to enter into a pact with Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *may do so.*
7. *Whoever wishes to enter into a pact with the Quraysh may do so.*
8. *You [the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*] shall have to return to Madinah this year and not enter Makkah.*
9. *You may return next year with your companions to perform Umrah. You may then enter Makkah and stay for only three days.*
10. *(When you come) You may only carry those weapons that a*

traveller normally carries and all swords are to be sheathed) You may not enter with anything else.

After the treaty was contracted, the Banu Khuzā'ah tribe (in accordance with the sixth clause) announced that they wished to enter into a pact with the Muslims. At the same time, the Banu Bakr tribe announced their solidarity with the Quraysh (in accordance with the seventh clause). It was actually this factor that led to the conquest of Makkah because the Muslims marched to Makkah when the Quraysh assisted the Banu Bakr in a fight against the Banu Khuzā'ah.

Some of the above clauses are recorded in Bukhari, others in Muslim and others in Abu Dawūd in the relevant chapters. Also refer to "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.4 p.199 to 203*).

THE DOUBTS OF SAYYIDINA UMAR رضى الله عنه

Displeased with some of the clauses, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Are we not on the truth and are the Quraysh not upon falsehood? Will not the martyred ones from us be in Heaven and the dead from among them be in Hell? Then why should we tolerate disgrace in our Dīn *(religion)* and return without Allāh's decision between us (by way of Jihād)?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "I am Allāh's messenger and will never disobey Him. Allāh's assistance is with me." Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه asked, "Did you not tell us that we would make Circumambulation of Allāh's house?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied by saying, "I did not say that it would be this year." Thereafter, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه went to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and posed the same questions. He received the same reply there as well.

After the treaty had been concluded, a companion رضى الله عنه by the name of Sayyidina Abu Jandal رضى الله عنه escaped from Makkah and joined the Muslims at Hudaybiyyah. He pleaded to the Muslims that he stood to suffer terribly at the hands of the polytheists if he were returned to Makkah. However, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was already bound to abide by the pledge and no degree of entreaty from the Muslims could shake his word. Eventually, Sayyidina Abu Jandal رضى الله عنه had to be left behind. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "May Allāh distance the person who becomes one of us and then deserts us (to join the ranks of the disbelievers because we do not need him). Allāh will certainly create a passage for the person from the disbelievers who comes to us and has to be returned." [*Muslim v.1 p. 105*]

SHAVING THE HEAD AND SLAUGHTERING THE ANIMALS

When the treaty was concluded, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the companions رضى الله عنهم to slaughter their sacrificial animals and to shave their heads (to release them from Ihrām). However, anticipating that perhaps something would happen to allow them to complete their Umrah, no one rose to fulfil the instruction. When no response was received after repeating the instruction for the third time, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went to his wife Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها.

When he related the account to her she said, "If you want them to slaughter

their animals and shave their hair, go out there and without speaking to anyone, slaughter your camel and call someone to shave off your hair." When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did as advised, the companions رضى الله عنهم promptly followed suit. [*Bukhari v.1 p.380*]

THE INCIDENT OF SAYYIDINA ABU BASĪR رضى الله عنه AND HIS COMPANIONS

The incident of Sayyidina Abu Basīr رضى الله عنه and his companions is narrated in the books of Ahadīth with relevance to the hadith of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم quoted above where he said, "Allāh will certainly create a passage for the person from the disbelievers who comes to us and has to be returned (in compliance with the clause of the treaty)."

Sayyidina Abu Basīr رضى الله عنه became a Muslim in Makkah and left to join the Muslims in Madinah. However, the polytheists sent two persons from Makkah to bring him back in accordance with the clause of the treaty. True to his word, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم allowed them to take him back. When the three reached Dhul Hulayfa, Sayyidina Abu Basīr رضى الله عنه managed to kill one of his captors, but the other escaped to Madinah. Upon seeing the person hasten towards him, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commented, "It seems as if something terribly frightful has occurred to him." When the person reached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he exclaimed, "My companion has been killed and I will also be killed."

Following close behind him came Sayyidina Abu Basīr رضى الله عنه. He said, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Allāh has absolved you of your responsibility when you returned me. Allāh has now freed me from my captors." the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "This man is a true warmonger. If only there was someone to explain to him." Sayyidina Abu Basīr رضى الله عنه understood from this that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would return him again. He therefore left Madinah and set up a camp along the coast.

When Sayyidina Abu Jandal رضى الله عنه heard about this, he joined Sayyidina Abu Basīr رضى الله عنه there. Gradually, many other Muslims from Makkah joined the two until they became a sizeable group. Whenever a caravan of the Quraysh would pass by them en route to Shām (*Syria*), they would attack the caravan, kill the people and capture their merchandise. Beset with concern, the Quraysh sent a message to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم telling him that they wished to retract the clause that demanded the return of new Muslims to Makkah. All persons wishing to defect to the Muslims could now remain in Madinah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then sent a message to all the Muslims at the coast to come to Madinah. [*Bukhari v.1 p.380/1*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed the message to Sayyidina Abu Basīr رضى الله عنه, who received it on his deathbed. He passed away holding the message in his hands. Sayyidina Abu Jandal رضى الله عنه buried him and erected a Masjid at the spot. Sayyidina Abu Jandal رضى الله عنه returned to Madinah with his companions, where he lived until the reign of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. During this period he left on a Jihād expedition towards Shām *(Syria)* where he was martyred. [*"Fat'hul Bāri" v.5 p.351*]

THE DECLARATION OF REWARD FOR THE BELIEVERS AND PUNISHMENT FOR THE POLYTHEISTS AND HYPOCRITES

Allāh declares, *"It is He Who sends tranquillity into the hearts of the believers so that their faith increases together with the faith they have."* It is by virtue of this faith (Belief) that Allāh shall *"admit the believing men and women into gardens beneath which rivers flow. They will abide there forever and He shall pardon them for their sins. This is a great success in Allāh 's sight."*

On the other hand, Allāh will *"punish the hypocrite men and women as well as the polytheistic men and women."* With regard to these people, Allāh mentions five things.

1. *Allāh says that the polytheists and hypocrites men and women all "hold an evil opinion of Allāh." This includes their disbelief in Allāh, falsifying of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *and their hope that the Muslims are destroyed in battle never to return to Madinah. Allāh will punish the Polytheists and hypocrites women as well because they harbour the same beliefs and malice that their men do.*
2. *"An evil calamity shall befall them." 'They will be killed or taken captive in battle and the snowballing success of the Muslims will prove to be a thorn in their side.*
3. *"Allāh is angry with them"*
4. *"(Allāh) curses them"*
5. *"and (Allāh) has prepared Hell for them. What an evil place to return to!"*

Allāh continues thereafter by declaring, *"The armies of the heavens and the earth belong to Allāh and Allāh is always the Mighty and Wise."* This verse is a repetition of verse 4 above where Allāh mentions, *"The armies of the heavens and the earth belong to Allāh and Allāh is Ever All Knowing, the Wise."* Allāh is at liberty to use whichever armies He wills to accomplish any task He decrees. These verses warn the disbelievers against thinking that they will be able to vanquish the Muslims easily because the Muslims are few and ill equipped. At the same time, the Muslims are also encouraged not to lose hope because Allāh has tremendous means of rendering assistance to them despite all odds.

NOTE : Verse 4 states *"Allāh is Ever All Knowing, the Wise"* and verse 7 states *"Allāh is always the Mighty and Wise."* These verses make it clear to the Muslims that Allāh is well Aware of their friends as well as their foes. He is Mighty enough to enforce any decision that He takes and none can reverse His decree. He will therefore pass judgement according to His perfect wisdom, thereby rewarding people as He pleases and punishing others as he pleases.

NOTE : Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"So that Allāh may forgive you for those shortcomings that have passed and those*

that may occur in the future." The entire Ummah unanimously agree that the verse does not refer to real sins because all the Prophets عليهم السلام were innocent of such sins. The *"shortcomings"* mentioned in the verse refer to judgemental errors and Allāh used to admonish the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when any of these occurred. An example was when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم opted to accept ransoms from the captives of Badr. Another example was when he excused some hypocrites from participating in Jihād. With reference to this, Allāh states, *"Allāh has forgiven you. Why did you exempt them before the true ones became manifest before you and you became aware of the liars."* [*Surah Tauba (9), verse 43*]

Yet another example is when the blind Companion Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umm Maktūm رضى الله عنه came to see The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while the latter was busy inviting some prominent disbelievers towards Islām. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم became displeased at this and his displeasure became apparent when he frowned. Allāh disapproved of this act and revealed the verse, *"He frowned and turned away because a blind man came to him."* [*Surah Abas (80), verses 1 & 2*]

Despite the fact that Allāh had forgiven the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for everything, he still exerted himself greatly in worship, standing in Tahajjud Salāh for endless hours. This caused his feet to swell and crack. When he was asked about this exertion despite being forgiven, he replied, "Should I then not be a thankful slave? (i.e. it is only appropriate that I show gratitude for such a great favour by carrying out great acts of worship)." [*Bukhari v.1 p.152 and v.2 p.716*]

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ شَٰهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ لِّتُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٩﴾

(8) Verily We have sent you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم!] as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. (9) So that you people believe in Allāh, believe in His messenger, assist Him (His religion), revere Him and glorify Him morning and evening.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS A WITNESS, A BEARER OF GLAD TIDINGS AND A WARNER

The first of the above verses express three great attributes of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The first attribute of being a witness refers to the testimony that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will give on the Day of Judgment when he will verify the veracity of his Ummah. This has been discussed in commentary of the following two verses:

📖 *"...that you may be witness over the people and the messenger a witness over you."* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 143*]

> *"...so that the messenger may be a witness over you, and that you be witnesses over mankind."* [*Surah Hajj (22), verse 78*]

The other two attributes are that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a bearer of glad tidings to convey to mankind good news about the tremendous rewards that Allāh has in store for them in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* in exchange for Belief and good deeds. He also came to warn them against disobeying Allāh, which will spell their ultimate doom. Conveying glad tidings to people and warning them was the task of each of the Prophets عليهم السلام. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also fulfilled this task to the highest degree, as can be witnessed from the innumerable volumes of his sayings. A narration of Bukhari mentions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was described with the very same attributes in the Torah.

Thereafter, Allāh addresses the believers, instructing them to *"believe in Allāh, believe in His messenger, assist Him (His religion), revere Him and glorify Him morning and evening."* A believer should glorify Allāh with the conviction that Allāh is free from all types of defects and iniquities.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ يَدُ ٱللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۚ فَمَن نَّكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنكُثُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَٰهَدَ عَلَيْهُ ٱللَّهَ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٠﴾

(10) Indeed those who pledge their allegiance to you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم!], they really pledge their allegiance to Allāh. Allāh's hand is above theirs. So whoever breaches (the pledge) does so to his own detriment. Allāh will soon grant a tremendous reward to the one who fulfils the pledge he makes with Allāh.

A PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TAKEN WITH THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS ACTUALLY A PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TAKEN WITH ALLĀH

When Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه was detained in Makkah after being sent to negotiate with the Quraysh, the rumour reached the Muslims at Hudaybiyyah that he had been martyred. This spurred the Muslims to resolve to wage Jihād against the Quraysh. On this occasion, the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم pledged their allegiance to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم beneath a tree in Hudaybiyyah, undertaking to fight to the last and never to desert him. It is with reference to this pledge that Allāh says, *'indeed those who pledge their allegiance to you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم!], they really pledge their allegiance to Allāh."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's messenger who called people towards Allāh's obedience. People who respond to his call are actually responding to Allāh because the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم instructions proceed directly from Allāh. The pledge of allegiance taken on this occasion denoted obedience to Allāh as well as obedience to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In fact, numerous verses of the Qur'ān explicitly instruct obedience to both

Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *'Whoever obeys the messenger has obeyed Allāh."* [*Surah 4, verse 80*]

It is not necessary for people to place their hands on top of each others' hands when pledging allegiance because it will also suffice to take a pledge verbally. However, because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took the hands of the companions رضى الله عنهم when taking the pledge from them on the occasion of Hudaybiyyah (as was customary in those days as it is now as well), Allāh states, *"Allāh's hand is above theirs."* Although Allāh is free of physical limbs, mention of *"Allāh's hand"* in the verse is merely metaphorical and is mentioned to emphasise the fact that the pledge taken with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمwas actually taken with Allāh. Mention of *"Allāh's hand"* also serves to accentuate the importance of the pledge.

Since the sincerity of a person swearing allegiance' cannot be ascertained, they are reminded to be true to their pledge when Allāh states, *"So whoever breaches (the pledge) does so to his own detriment."* Going against one's word is a major sin on its own. Breaching a pledge which one has sworn in Allāh's name is even worse. Even graver is breaching of a pledge that is taken with the Holy Prophet of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. As for those who remain true to their word, Allāh declares, *"Allāh will soon grant a tremendous reward to the one who fulfils the pledge he makes with Allāh."*

NOTE : The system of pledging allegiance (Bay'ah) in the line of "Tarīqah" (commonly referred to as "Tasawwuf") is a blessed and sanctified practice. If a person becomes a follower of a "Sheikh" who adheres strictly to the Sunnah, he should dutifully maintain his relationship with him. However, if the "Sheikh" instructs one to carry out any act that contravenes the Shari'ah, the instruction should be ignored because it will be sinful. If a person has taken Bay'ah (pledged allegiance) to a "Sheikh" who is a sinner or someone who introduces innovations into religion, it will be compulsory to break contact with him.

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا فَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ۚ يَقُولُونَ
بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ
أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا ۚ بَلْ كَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا (11) بَلْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ لَنْ يَنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا وَزُيِّنَ ذَٰلِكَ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَنْتُمْ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ وَكُنْتُمْ
قَوْمًا بُورًا (12) وَمَنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَإِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَعِيرًا (13) وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ يَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا
(14)

(11) Soon the villagers left behind will tell you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم], "Our wealth and families have preoccupied us, so seek forgiveness on our behalf" They utter with their tongues that which is not within their hearts. Say, "Who has any power against Allāh if He intends any harm to afflict you or if He intends any good to come to you? Nay, but Allāh is Ever Aware of what you do." (12) However, the fact is that you people think that the messenger and the believers will never return to their families. This has been adorned in your hearts and you entertain evil thoughts. You were a destroyed nation. (13) Whoever does not believe in Allāh and His messenger (should know that) We have certainly prepared a blazing fire for the disbelievers. (14) To Allāh belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He forgives whoever He wills and punishes whoever He wills. Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE EVIL THOUGHTS AND SCHEMES OF THOSE VILLAGERS WHO DID NOT ACCOMPANY THE JIHĀD EXPEDITIONS

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.4 p.191*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that during the year that the treaty of Hudaybiyyah took place, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced to all the villages neighbouring Madinah that he intended to leave for Umrah. The announcement was intended to urge people to join the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for Umrah and to muster a sizeable group of people in case a skirmish arose or in case the Quraysh decided to resist the Muslims. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even donned the Ihrām and took a sacrificial animal along with him so that people could be convinced that he intended only to perform Umrah and not to fight.

As a result, a large group of companion's رضى الله عنهم numbering more than 1400 accompanied him. However, there were still a large number of villagers who did not accompany the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had not yet returned to Madinah when Allāh revealed the verse about them saying, *"Soon the villagers left behind will tell you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم], 'Our wealth and families have preoccupied us, so seek forgiveness on our behalf'"* They made excuses to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, telling him that they had to tend to their families and property because there was no one to do this in their absence.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived back in Madinah, these people came to him with the very same excuse that Allāh mentioned in the verse. Allāh refutes their excuses by stating, *"They utter with their tongues that which is not within their hearts."* Their utterances are nothing but lies. They made it seem like they actually wanted to accompany the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but were unable to do so because of their preoccupation. However, they had never intended to join the Muslims in the first place. Even their request for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to seek forgiveness on their behalf was insincere because they had no regard for this. They never believed in Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as His messenger, so how could they have any concept of forgiveness?

Allāh then cautions all those people who make false excuses and who intend plotting against Islām, *"Who has any power against Allāh if He intends any harm to afflict you or if He intends any good to come to you?"* It was necessary for

people to respond to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم announcement to join him. Those who did not heed this call were sinful and deserved chastisement. Therefore, Allāh cautions them that they will be helpless to resist Allāh's punishment if it had to overtake them on this account.

Addressing them further, Allāh says, *"Nay, but Allāh is Ever Aware of what you do."* Allāh is well Aware of what these people harbour in the deepest recesses of their hearts. They can therefore hide nothing from Him. Despite the claims they make, Allāh reveals their thoughts when He says, *"However, the fact is that you people think that the messenger and the believers will never return to their families. This has been adorned in your hearts and you entertain evil thoughts."* They believed and even hoped that the disbelievers should wipe out the Muslims. In fact, they would even discourage others from participating by urging them to hold back and see the outcome of the expedition first. Says Allāh about them, *"You were a destroyed nation."* [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

Allāh says further, *"Whoever does not believe in Allāh and His messenger (should know that) We have certainly prepared a blazing fire for the disbelievers. To Allāh belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He forgives whoever He wills and punishes whoever He wills. Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful."* If those who made the false excuses and undermined the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم repent for their sins after becoming true Muslims, Allāh will still forgive them.

سَيَقُولُ ٱلْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا ٱنطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَىٰ مَغَانِمَ لِتَأْخُذُوهَا ذَرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ ۖ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُبَدِّلُوا۟ كَلَـٰمَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُل لَّن تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَٰلِكُمْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا ۚ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٥﴾

(15) Soon, when you proceed to take possession of the booty, those left behind will say, "Allow us to follow you." They wish to alter Allāh's speech. Tell them, "You may never follow us! Thus has Allāh stated from before." They will then say, "You people are merely jealous of us." In fact, they understand but a little.

FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING THOSE WHO DID NOT ACCOMPANY THE MUSLIMS TO HUDAYBIYYAH

It was not long after the treaty at Hudaybiyyah that the Muslims conquered the Jewish stronghold of Khaybar. Allāh did promise the Muslims present at Hudaybiyyah that they will soon receive a large booty. For this reason, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم distributed the booty of Khaybar among those present at Hudaybiyyah. This was in lieu of the booty that they would have received had they fought the Quraysh on that occasion.

In the above verse, Allāh tells the Muslims that those who stayed behind from Hudaybiyyah will soon want to join the others when they proceed to Khaybar, where the booty proved tremendous. Allāh says, *"Soon, when you proceed to take possession of the booty, those left behind will say, 'Allow us to follow you."* However, Allāh issued a clear command that they should be told, *"You may*

never follow us (to Khaybar)! Thus has Allāh stated from before."

"They wish to alter Allāh's speech." This phrase has been interpreted to mean that they wish to change Allāh's command not to take them along. Other commentators have interpreted the phrase to mean that they wish to change Allāh's instruction that the booty of Khaybar should be distributed only among those Muslims who were present at Hudaybiyyah. The hypocrites were prepared to march with the Muslims to Khaybar only because they knew that much was to be gained with only mild fighting.

"They will then say, 'You people are merely jealous of us." When the hypocrites were refused permission to join the Khaybar expedition, they claimed that the refusal was not Allāh's command but stemmed from jealousy on the part of the Muslims.

"In fact, they understand but a little." Allāh assures the Muslims that the refusal has nothing to do with jealousy, but stems from the fact that these people understand only the material gains of this world, which they hanker after. Their participation in the expedition would therefore be only for the sake of the booty and not for the sake of Allāh's religion

A question has arisen with regard to those Companions رضی الله عنهم who arrived from Abysinnia and received a share of the booty without being present at Hudaybiyyah. Commentators have tendered the following two explanations for this:

1. *They were granted wealth from the "Khums" i.e. the one-fifth of the booty which the Holy Prophet* صلی الله علیه وسلم *could distribute at his discretion. The participants at Hudaybiyyah were exclusively entitled to the other four-fifths.*
2. *the Holy Prophet* صلی الله علیه وسلم *accorded them a portion of the booty with the consent of the other Sahabah* رضی الله عنهم. *["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.4 p.199 & "Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 26 p.101]*

قُل لِّلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ أُولِي بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ فَإِن تُطِيعُوا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا وَإِن تَتَوَلَّوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿16﴾

(16) Tell those villagers who were left behind, "You will soon be called to a nation of immense strength whom you will fight or who will accept Islām. If you obey, Allāh will accord you a grand reward, but if you turn away like you did in the past, Allāh will inflict a painful punishment on you."

ALLĀH FURTHER ADDRESSES THOSE WHO FAILED TO JOIN THE MUSLIMS TO HUDAYBIYYAH

Allāh foretells an incident in the above verse. Addressing the Holy Prophet

صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Tell those villagers who were left behind, 'You will soon be called to a nation of immense strength whom you will fight or who will accept Islām. If you obey, Allāh will accord you a grand reward, but if you turn away like you did in the past, Allāh will inflict a painful punishment on you."'*

With regard to whom the *"nation of immense strength"* refers, the following interpretations have been quoted:

- Sayyidina Rāfi bin Khudaij رضى الله عنه says, "We [the companions رضى الله عنهم] used to recite this verse but never knew which nation was being referred to. When Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه issued the command to fight the Banu Hanīfah tribe, we realised that the verse referred to them." The Banu Hanīfah tribe hailed from Yamāmah and supported one of their clansmen by the name of Musailamah Kadhāb, who claimed to be a Prophet.
- Certain commentators say that the verse refers to the Romans and Persians against whom Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه dispatched armies during his term as Caliph.
- Others says that the verse refers to the Banu Hawāzin tribe against whom the Battle of Hunayn was fought.
- It has also been mentioned that it refers to the Roman army against whom the Muslims marched to Tabūk.

After quoting these interpretations, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" states that the first seems most appropriate. As the Leader of the believers, Sayyidina Abu Bakr's رضى الله عنه command to march against the Banu Hanīfah was binding on the Muslims because failure to obey the Leader of the Believers (*Amir-ur-Muminin)* warrants punishment from Allāh. He adds that many members of the Banu Hanīfah accepted Islām, thereby fitting the description of *"whom you will fight or who will accept Islām."*

The call to fight the Banu Hawāzin did not take place in Madinah because the Muslims marched against them from Makkah immediately after the Conquest of Makkah took place. The verse therefore cannot refer to the Battle of Hunayn against them. He adds that the verse cannot also refer to the Battle of Tabūk because no fighting took place at Tabūk. The verse cannot refer to the battles against the Romans and Persians either because it cannot be proven that these battles were Fardh Ain (obligatory for every Muslim to participate). For this reason, anyone failing to participate in these battles cannot be reproached and made to suffer punishment.

"....or who will accept Islām." This phrase may be translated as *"or who will submit"*. In this case, it would refer to submission to pay the Jizya (*Non-Muslim tax in an Islamic State*). Allama Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes in "Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" (*v.6 p.365*) that ten to eleven thousand people from the Banu Hanīfah tribe were killed in the battle against the Muslims, while many of them also accepted the invitation to Islām that Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه extended to them. These people also met with Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه. It is

therefore most apt to say that the verse refers to them. And Allāh knows best.

لَّيْسَ عَلَى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ ۗ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا (17)

(17) There shall be no sin on the blind, no sin on the paralysed and no sin on the ill. Allāh will enter those who obey Him and His messenger into gardens beneath which rivers flow. As for those who turn away, He will inflict, a tormenting punishment on them.

THERE WILL BE NO SIN ON THOSE WITH VALID EXCUSES AND THE OBEDIENT ONES WILL ATTAIN HEAVEN

Allama Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه reports that when the verse *"if you turn away like you did in the past, Allāh will inflict a painful punishment on you* -- was revealed, those Muslims who were physically handicapped grew concerned about themselves because of their inability to participate in Jihād. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verse i.e. *"There shall be no sin on the blind, no sin on the paralysed and no sin on the ill."* i.e. There will be no sin on these people if they do not participate in Jihād, as well as for those having other disabilities. This concession has been discussed in Surah Taubah where Allāh says, *"There shall be no sin on the weak, the ill and those who do not find the means to spend, if they present themselves with sincere hearts before Allāh and His messenger."* [*Surah 9, verse 91*]

Allāh then mentions a general principle when He states, *"Allāh will enter those who obey Him and His messenger into gardens beneath which rivers flow. As for those who turn away (from the injunctions of Allāh and His messenger), He will inflict a tormenting punishment on them."*

۞ لَّقَدْ رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ
فَأَنزَلَ ٱلسَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَٰبَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا (18) وَمَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ
عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا (19) وَعَدَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ مَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً تَأْخُذُونَهَا فَعَجَّلَ لَكُمْ هَٰذِهِۦ وَكَفَّ
أَيْدِىَ ٱلنَّاسِ عَنكُمْ وَلِتَكُونَ ءَايَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ صِرَٰطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا (20) وَأُخْرَىٰ
لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا۟ عَلَيْهَا قَدْ أَحَاطَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرًا (21) وَلَوْ قَٰتَلَكُمُ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوَلَّوُا۟ ٱلْأَدْبَٰرَ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا (22) سُنَّةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى قَدْ
خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ ٱللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا (23)

(18) Allāh was well pleased with the believers when they pledged their allegiance to you beneath the tree. Allāh knew what was in their hearts, sent

tranquility onto them and rewarded them with a victory close at hand. (19) And (Allāh will also reward them with) abundant spoils of war that they will take. Allāh is always Mighty, Wise. (20) Allāh promises you abundant spoils of war that you can have, will grant it to you immediately and restrain people's hands from you. This is to be a sign for the believers and so that Allāh may guide you to the straight path. (21) There are still other victories that you have not yet been able to attain and is well within Allāh's knowledge. Allāh has always had power over everything. (22) If the disbelievers were to fight you, they would turn their backs and then not find any ally or helper. (23) This has been Allāh's practice that has passed from before and you will not find any change in Allāh's practice.

THE VIRTUE OF THOSE WHO TOOK THE PLEDGE OF "RIDHWĀN" AND THE PROMISE OF A TREMENDOUS BOOTY FOR THEM

Beneath a tree of Hudaybiyyah, the Muslims pledged their allegiance to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, undertaking never to desert him if a battle arises. With regard to this pledge, Allāh announces, *"Allāh was well pleased with the believers when they pledged their allegiance to you beneath the tree."* This verse is a great honour for those Sahābah *(Companions)* رضى الله عنهم who took the pledge because it is a medal of Allāh's pleasure received in this very world. As a verse of the Qur'ān, this award will be before every reciter of the Qur'ān until the Day of Judgment. Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه has reported the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Insha Allāh, no person who took the pledge at Hudaybiyyah will ever enter Jahannam *(Hell)*."

"Allāh knew what was in their hearts" Allāh Was well aware of the sincerity brimming in their hearts and bestowed His favour on them when He *"sent tranquillity onto them"*. Thus, they were completely satisfied with the decision that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had taken to enter into a treaty with the disbelievers – realising that it was for the benefit of the Muslims.

Allāh says further that He *"rewarded them with a victory close at hand and abundant spoils of war that they will take."* Commentators state that this victory refers to the conquest of Khaybar, the stronghold of the Banu Nadhīr, a Jewish tribe that was expelled from Madinah. This conquest took place two months after the treaty at Hudaybiyyah. The Muslims marched against the Jews of Khaybar because they constantly plotted and conspired with the polytheists against the Muslims. The Muslims received a tremendous amount of booty from this conquest – as Allāh had promised.

Allāh then states, *"Allāh is always Mighty, Wise."* Allāh is Mighty enough to grant victory to whoever He wills and His decisions are full of wisdom.

"Allāh promises you abundant spoils of war that you can have, will grant it to you immediately and restrain people's hands from you." When the Muslims marched to Khaybar, the Banu Asad and Banu Ghitfān tribes decided that it was an ideal opportunity for them to attack and loot Madinah. However, Allāh instilled fear into their hearts and therefore they never carried out what they intended. Allāh refers to this when He says that He would *"restrain people's hands from you."* [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

Other interpretations of *"and restrain people's hands from you"* are:

- The Jews intended to attack the families of the Muslims in Madinah while the men were out in Jihād. However, Allāh restricted their intentions to mere intentions and they were unable to accomplish the evil scheme. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v.26 p.109*]
- The Banu Asad and Banu Ghitfān tribes left to assist the Jews of Khaybar but returned before reaching Khaybar.
- Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean that Allāh restrained the hands of the polytheists by means of the treaty, whereas they were already preparing to fight.

"This (booty) *is to be a sign for the believers and so that Allāh may guide you to the straight path."* Allāh granted the booty to the Muslims so that it may be of use to them and so that they may be convinced that Allāh is with them. In this way, they will always tread the straight path.

Allāh states further, *"There are still other victories that you have not yet been able to attain and is well within Allāh 's knowledge."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the victories mentioned in this verse are those that the Muslims gained after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed away, like those gained over the Romans and Persians. Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that it refers to the Conquest of Makkah, Sayyidina Ikrima رحمة الله عليه says that it is the victory at Hunayn, while Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that it refers to all the Muslim conquests that are to take place until Judgment day. [*Qurtubi*]

Certain commentators have translated *"victories that you have not yet been able to attain"* as *"victories that you have never deemed possible"*. Of course, Allāh knew of these because His knowledge encompasses events of the past, present and future. Allāh is perfectly Capable of according these conquests to the Muslims because *'Allāh has always had power over everything."*

"If the disbelievers were to fight you, they would turn their backs and then not find any ally or helper." While some commentators state that this verse refers to the polytheists of Makkah, others say that it refers to the Banu Asad and Banu Ghitfān tribes who had intended to attack Madinah in the absence of the Muslim army.

"This has been Allāh's practice that has passed from before and you will not find any change in Allāh's practice." It was always Allāh's practice with the Prophets عليهم السلام of the past that He would grant them victory at the end, assist those close to Him and grant them victory over the disbelievers.

وَهُوَ الَّذِى كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُم بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا (24)

(24) It is Allāh Who restrained their hands from you and your hands from them right in Makkah after granting you dominance over them. Allāh is always Watchful over what you do.

ALLĀH RESTRAINED THE MUSLIMS AND DISBELIEVERS FROM ATTACKING EACH OTHER

Allama Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has cited several opinions with regard to the circumstances under which the above verse was revealed. Muslim has quoted two incidents in this regard, both of which are pertinent to the revelation of the verse.

The first has been narrated by Sayyidina Salamah bin Akwa رضى الله عنه. He says that after the treaty had been concluded between the Muslims and the people of Makkah, he was once lying beneath a tree to remove the thorns from it. As he lay there, four polytheists of Makkah passed by and uttered disrespectful words regarding the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Disgusted with what they said, Sayyidina Salamah bin Akwa رضى الله عنه left the tree and went to lie beneath another tree. When the four of them hung up their swords to lie down, Sayyidina Salamah رضى الله عنه drew his sword and seized theirs. Addressing them he said, "I swear by the Being Who has granted honour to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! I shall sever from the roots the head of the person who even lifts his head." He then took them to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He says that when he reached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, his uncle Āmir رضى الله عنه brought seventy captives to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, all of whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم forgave. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse *"It is Allāh Who restrained their hands from you and your hands from them right in Makkah after granting you dominance over them."* [*Muslim v.2 p. 113*]

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه narrates that a group of eighty armed polytheists descended the mount of Tan'īm intending to attack the Muslims in a moment of unmindfulness. However, the Muslims apprehended them beforehand and they all surrendered. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم set them all free. It was on this occasion that the above verse was revealed. [*Muslim v.2 p.1 16*]

Allāh ensures the safety of the Muslims in unique ways. Allāh also changes the hearts of people most effectively and it is seen that hardened disbelievers used to accept Islām after being forgiven by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

هُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَٱلْهَدْىَ مَعْكُوفًا أَن يَبْلُغَ مَحِلَّهُۥ ۚ
وَلَوْلَا رِجَالٌ مُّؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَآءٌ مُّؤْمِنَٰتٌ لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَن تَطَـُٔوهُمْ فَتُصِيبَكُم مِّنْهُم مَّعَرَّةٌۢ
بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۖ لِّيُدْخِلَ ٱللَّهُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا۟ لَعَذَّبْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿25﴾ إِذْ جَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنزَلَ
ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوٓا۟ أَحَقَّ

(25) They are the ones who disbelieved, forbade you from the Masjidul Harām, and forbade the sacrificial animals, who were left restrained from reaching their destination. If it were not for you trampling many Muslim men and many Muslim women about whom you were unaware and then unknowingly suffering harm on their account, the matter would have been concluded. So that Allāh enters whoever He wills into His mercy. If they (these Muslim men and women) were to separate (from the Makkans), We would inflict a painful punishment on the disbelievers from the people of Makkah. (26) When the disbelievers took the prejudice within their hearts, then too, the prejudice of the period of ignorance; Allāh sent His tranquility into the heart of His messenger and the hearts of the believers and stuck the word of piety to them as they are most deserving of it and worthy of it. Allāh always has knowledge of everything.

THE DISBELIEVERS FORBID THE MUSLIMS FROM THE MASJIDUL HARĀM AND HAVE ENTRENCHED PREJUDICE WITHIN THEIR HEARTS

The above verse contains a series of matters. These are:

1. Allāh condemns the polytheists for forbidding the Muslims entry into the Masjidul Harām and also for preventing them from slaughtering their sacrificial animals within the Haram. This act of theirs was sufficient to warrant Jihād against them. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took seventy sacrificial animals with him, which were to be slaughtered in Makkah. Because the polytheists denied him entry into Makkah, the animals had to be slaughtered at Hudaybiyyah.

2. Allāh informs the Muslims that there were many Muslim men and women in Makkah the identities of whom were unknown to the Muslims (*"many Muslim men and many Muslim women about whom you were unaware"*). If the Muslims had been commanded to fight the Makkans, these innocent Muslims would have been unknowingly trampled underfoot and harmed by the companions *(of Holy Prophet)* رضى الله عنهم because they lived among the disbelievers. Allāh Ta'āla did not allow a battle to be fought out of regard for these Muslims who were unable to migrate to Madinah. A treaty was thus entered into even though the disbelievers deserved punishment on account of their deeds.

"and then unknowingly suffering harm on their account" The Arabic word "ma' arrah" (translated above as *"harm "*) has also been translated as "hardship", "and "reproach". Certain commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that if the Muslims had to meet the Makkans in battle, they may have mistakenly killed some Makkan Muslims in the process. As a result of this they would have to suffer insult (referred to as *"harm "*) from the polytheists who would say that the Muslims kill their own kind.

Other commentators maintain that the verse means that if Jihād had to take place, the Muslims would have been sinful for killing the innocent Muslims. A

third opinion states that "Diyah" (blood money) would have been due from the Muslims had they killed any of the innocent Muslims of Makkah. However, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has mentioned that these two opinions are not worth consideration.

3. Allāh prevented the Jihād so that even without waging Jihād, Allāh may enter *"whoever He wills into His mercy."* Therefore, Allāh saved the Muslims from a battle, entered them into the all-embracing fold of His mercy and even safeguarded the weak Muslims in Makkah. These Muslims were constantly harassed by the polytheists before the treaty, but could worship Allāh in peace thereafter. Certain commentators have mentioned that *"whoever He wills"* also includes the polytheists because after the treaty they had the opportunity to ponder about Islām and associate freely with the Muslims. As a result, thousands accepted Islām. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v.26 p.1 15*]

4. *"If they* (the Muslim men and women in Makkah) *were to separate* (from the Makkans), *We would inflict a painful punishment on the disbelievers from the people of Makkah."* It is stated in "Ruhul Ma'āni" that these Muslim men and women in Makkah were nine in total -seven men and two women.

"When the disbelievers took the prejudice within their hearts, then too, the prejudice of the period of ignorance... "Allāh says that it was this prejudice that caused the polytheists to stop the Muslims from entering Makkah. The Arabic word "hamiyyah" (translated above as *"prejudice "*) refers to any word or deed that a person uses to safeguard himself from something that he considers to be a defect or source of shame. When the Quraysh learned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم intended to perform Umrah, they resolved never to allow him into Makkah because the other Arabs would taunt them by saying that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entered Makkah against the wishes of the Quraysh. It was this unwarranted prejudice that spurred them on to oppose beginning the treaty with the words *"Bismillahir Rahmānir Rahīm"* and to write "Muhammad, the son of Abdullāh" instead of "Muhammad, the messenger of Allāh".

"Allāh sent His tranquillity into the heart of His messenger and the hearts of the believers... "It was because of this *"tranquillity"* that they did not oppose the decision to perform Umrah the following year and to return without a fight.

Allāh states further that He *"stuck the word of piety to them as they are most deserving of it and worthy of it."* Tirmidhi reports from Sayyidina Ubayy bin Ka'b رضى الله عنه that the *"Kalimatut Taqwa"* ("word of piety") refers to the Kalimah *"Lā Ilāha Illallāh"*. It is called the *"word of piety"* because it protects the reciter from disbelief, polytheism and sins.

Allāh has stuck the *"word of piety"* to them means that He made the people of belief adopt this Kalimah and keep it as their lifelong companion. As a result, they fulfil the demands of this Kalimah and remember Allāh because of it. Allāh says that the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم are *"most deserving"* and *"worthy"* of this Kalimah, which means that Allāh has knowledge of the fact that they would accept the Kalimah and fulfil all its requirements. Allāh had conditioned them to be able to accept Islām and live their lives in accordance with its injunctions.

"Allāh always has knowledge of everything." In accordance with His infinite

knowledge and wisdom, Allāh makes people worthy of receiving the Kalimah and then grants them the fortitude to remain steadfast on it.

لَّقَدْ صَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ ٱلرُّءْيَا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ لَتَدْخُلُنَّ ٱلْمَسْجِدَ ٱلْحَرَامَ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ ۖ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا۟ فَجَعَلَ مِن دُونِ ذَٰلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا (27) هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًا (28)

(27) Verily, Allāh shall make the dream of His messenger come precisely true. When Allāh wills, you people shall definitely enter the Masjidul Harām in peace with your hair shaved or trimmed without any fear. Allāh had knowledge of that which you were unaware of, and has decreed a victory even before this (entry into the Masjidul Harām). (28) It is Allāh Who has sent His messenger with guidance and with the true religion so as to make it dominate over all religions. Allāh suffices as a Witness.

ALLĀH SHOWED A TRUE DREAM TO HIS MESSENGER AND HAS SENT HIM WITH THE TRUTH AND GUIDANCE

Commentators document that before the Muslims left for Hudaybiyyah, Allāh showed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a dream in which he saw himself and the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم peacefully entering the Masjidul Harām some of them with their heads shaved and others with their hair trimmed. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم related the dream to the prophet's companion's رضى الله عنهم, they were overjoyed and left for Makkah in anticipation of performing Umrah.

However, when the Muslims were halted at Hudaybiyyah and were bound by the treaty to return without performing Umrah, they were naturally disappointed. As mentioned earlier, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه expressed this disappointment to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. A narration of Muslim (*v.2 p. 106*) reports that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه was well satisfied with the reply that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave him.

Although the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم accepted the situation, they were still overcome by natural feelings of sorrow. To dispel this feeling, Allāh revealed the above verse stating, *"Verily, Allāh shall make the dream of His messenger come precisely true. When Allāh wills, you people shall definitely enter the Masjidul Harām in peace with your hair shaved or trimmed without any fear."* The day did arrive the following year when the Muslims entered Makkah to perform Umrah without any fear. Since the dream did not stipulate the year of Umrah, the fact that the Umrah took place a year later does not affect the truthful nature of the dream itself.

"Allāh had knowledge of that which you were unaware of and has decreed a victory even before this (entry into the Masjidul Harām)." Allāh was well Aware of the

reasons for the delay in performing Umrah, whereas the Muslims were not. If the Muslims had been adamant to fight the polytheists, it would have been extremely difficult for them to march against the Jews of Khaybar two months later. Even if they had to march to Khaybar, they would have had to fear an attack on Madinah from the Makkans in their absence. The treaty ruled out this fear. The "victory" mentioned in this verse refers to the Muslims victory at Khaybar, which took place before they returned the following year for Umrah.

Allāh then speaks about the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, when He says, *"It is Allāh Who has sent His messenger with guidance and with the true religion so as to make it dominate over all religions."* Allāh fulfilled this promise of His, as has been discussed in verse 33 of Surah Taubah where Allāh states, *"it is He Who sent His messenger with guidance and the true religion so that He may make it overcome all other religions even though the polytheists detest it."*

"Allāh suffices as a Witness." Allāh is sufficient as a Witness to the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم remains Allāh' s messenger even though the polytheists of Makkah refused to begin the treaty with the words: *"Muhammad, the messenger of Allāh"*. [*Qurtubi v.16 p.292*]

مُّحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ أَشِدَّآءُ عَلَى ٱلْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَآءُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ تَرَىٰهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنًا ۖ سِيمَاهُمْ فِى وُجُوهِهِم مِّنْ أَثَرِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ ۚ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِى ٱلْإِنجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْـَٔهُۥ فَـَٔازَرَهُۥ فَٱسْتَغْلَظَ فَٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِۦ يُعْجِبُ ٱلزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ ٱلْكُفَّارَ ۗ وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ مِنْهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًۢا ﴿29﴾

(29) Muhammad صلی الله علیه وسلم is Allāh's messenger and those with him are stern against the disbelievers and compassionate among themselves. You will see them sometimes bowing (in Ruku), sometimes prostrating, seeking Allāh's bounty and His pleasure. Their hallmark is the mark of prostration on their faces. This is their description in the Torah. Their portrayal in the Injīl (Bible) is like that of a plantation that sprouts its shoots and strengthens it, after which it becomes thick and stands on its own stem, pleasing the farmer. (Allāh has nurtured the Sahabah رضی الله عنهم in this manner) so that the disbelievers may be enraged by them. Allāh has promised forgiveness and a grand reward for those of them who believe and do good deeds.

THE VIRTUE OF THE PROPHET'S COMPANIONS رضی الله عنهم

This Surah extols the praises of the prophet's companions رضی الله عنهم in various verses and concludes in the same manner. Allāh says, *"Muhammad صلی الله علیه وسلم is Allāh's messenger and those with him are stern against the disbelievers and compassionate among themselves."* This quality of the prophet's companions رضی الله عنهم has been discussed in verse 54 of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah*

5) where Allāh says that they are *"kind to the believers and stern towards the disbelievers."*

This trait was one of the outstanding qualities of the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم. It is tragic that the reverse is practised by today's Muslims. One will notice that love for this world has prompted many Muslims to be compassionate towards the disbelievers and harsh towards their fellow Muslims.

Allāh praises the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم further when He says, *"You (O reader) will see them sometimes bowing (in Ruku), sometimes prostrating".* This phrase describes the abundance of Salāh that the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم performed and that they could always be found in Salāh. They were very particular even about the Nawāfil (optional) Salāh and would spend entire nights in Salāh.

The third attribute of the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم discussed in this verse is that they always applied themselves to the purpose of *"seeking Allāh's bounty and His pleasure."* They never sought material gains from their deeds. All their deeds were intended to attain Allāh' s pleasure and happiness.

Allāh then describes them further with the words, *"Their hallmark is the mark of prostration on their faces."* Quoting from various commentators, the author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has recorded the following interpretations of this verse:

- As the literal meaning of the verse implies, traces of sand could be noticed on their foreheads on account of the prostration in Salāh.
- Their faces will be illuminated on the Day of Judgment, when it will known that they were people who were very particular about their Salāh.
- The prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم were imbued with the qualities of humility and general good character. People who perform Salāh in abundance attain the special blessings of Salāh, one of which is that the qualities of humility and a friendly disposition shine on their faces.

"This is their description in the Torah." Allāh says that He had described the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم in the above manner in the Torah given to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. As far as their description in the Injīl (Bible) goes, Allāh says, *"Their portrayal in the Injīl is like that of a plantation that sprouts its shoots and strengthens it, after which it becomes thick and stands on its own stem, pleasing the farmer."* After a farmer sows the seeds for his crop, the first sign of the expected harvest is when the tiny shoots of the crop begin to burst from the earth. These shoots are extremely fragile and weak at the beginning, but gradually strengthen and grow until they become firm, thick stems. The once brown ground now transforms into a flourishing field of sturdy crops -a scene which makes the farmer exuberant.

In a like manner, the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were initially a small band of people, but their numbers eventually grew until they became a force to be reckoned with. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه

وسلم himself saw their numbers in excess of a hundred thousand, after which they continued to spread the religion until they even toppled the Roman and Persian Empires and no force could oppose them.

"(Allāh has nurtured the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم *in this manner) so that the disbelievers may be enraged by them."* As the strength and domination of the Muslims snowballed, the disbelievers grew increasingly incensed and were unable to tolerate the progress of Islām and the Muslims. However, despite their efforts to curtail the expansion of Islām, Islām continued to flourish. Allāh says in Surah Saff, *"They intend to extinguish Allāh's light with their mouths. However, Allāh shall bring His light to completion even though the disbelievers abhor it. It is He Who sent His messenger with guidance and the true religion to make it dominant over all other religions, even though the idolaters may abhor it."* [*Surah 61, verses 8 and 9*]

Allāh then states a blanket rule when He says, *"Allāh has promised forgiveness and a grand reward for those of them who believe and do good deeds."* This applies to both the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم and the Muslim Ummah after them until the Judgment day.

NOTE : In Surah Fath, Allāh praises the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم in the following verses:

- *It is He Who sends tranquillity into the hearts of the believers so that their faith increases together with the faith they have. 'The armies of the heavens and the earth belong to Allāh and* Allāh *is Ever All Knowing, the Wise."[verse 4]*

- *That He may admit the believing men and women into gardens beneath which rivers flow. They will abide there forever and He shall pardon them for their sins. 'This is a great success in Allāh's sight." [verse 5]*

- *"Indeed those who pledge their allegiance to you [O Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم*!], they really pledge their allegiance to Allāh. Allāh's hand is above theirs." [verse 10]*

- *"Allāh was well pleased with the believers when they pledged their allegiance to you beneath the tree. Allāh knew what was in their hearts, sent tranquillity into them and rewarded them with a victory close at hand?"[verse 18]*

- *"Allāh sent His tranquillity into the heart of His messenger and the hearts of the believers and stuck the word of piety to them as they are most deserving of it and worthy of it."[verse 26]*

- *"Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *is Allāh's messenger and those with him are stern against the disbelievers and compassionate among themselves..." [verse 29]*

- *Allāh has nurtured! the companions of* رضى الله عنهم *in this manner) so that the disbelievers may be enraged by them."[verse 29]*

- *Allāh has promised forgiveness and a grand Reward for those*

of them who believe and do good deeds."[verse 29]

Allāh has also declared in verse 100 of Surah Taubah, *"The first to lead the way, from the Immigrants, the Ansār, and those who followed them with sincerity; Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them such gardens beneath which rivers flow, where they shall abide forever. This is the ultimate success."*

Whereas these verses heap praises on the companions of *(the Holy prophet)* رضی الله عنهم, the Rawāfidh sect are emphatic that all the companions of *(the Holy prophet)* رضی الله عنهم save a handful were disbelievers. Such people who claim that the companions of (*Companions*) رضی الله عنهم were disbelievers have themselves become disbelievers because their claim diametrically opposes the verses of the Qur'ān. When these people are told that they have become disbelievers because they reject the verses of the Qur'ān, their next preposterous claim is that the Qur'ān we have before us is not the same Qur'ān that was revealed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They say that the original Qur'ān is with Imām Mahdi رحمة الله عليه. This statement is also infidelity.

When a person once insulted the companions of (*Companions*) رضی الله عنهم in the presence of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه, the esteemed scholar remarked that any person with any hatred for any of the companions of (*Companions*) رضی الله عنهم in his heart will be included in the purport of the verse *"so that the disbelievers may be enraged by them"* i.e. such a person will be regarded as a disbeliever. [*Qurtubi*]

"Allāh has promised forgiveness and a grand reward for those of them who believe and do good deeds" [*verse 29*]. In support of what the Rawāfidh say, some Shias deduce from the above verse that the words "those of them" limits the number of companions of (*Companions*) رضی الله عنهم who are promised the above [i.e. the verse does not refer to all the companions of *(the Holy prophet)* رضی الله عنهم]. This statement is foolish because the phrase *"those of them"* is not a preclusive clause, but is intended for elucidation (called "bayāniyya" in Arabic). Even if it is assumed that the clause is preclusive as they say, what proof have the Rawāfidh to say that it precludes all the companions of (*Companions*) رضی الله عنهم besides the ones whom they regard as Muslims?

In addition to this, it should be noted that Allāh declared, *"Allāh was well pleased with the believers when they pledged their allegiance to you beneath the tree."* This verse attests to the fact that Allāh is pleased with. All of the 1400 to 1500 companions of (*Companions*) رضی الله عنهم present at Hudaybiyyah without precluding anyone. Similarly, verse 100 of Surah Taubah (quoted above) states that Allāh is pleased with all the immigrants and Ansār who were the first to lead the way as well as those who followed them. Here too, no preclusive clause is used. How will the Shias reply to these verses, which include the likes of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه? Allāh declares that He is pleased with Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه, yet the Shias are displeased with them! They are then actually displeased with Allāh (Allāh forbid!).

What can be said to people who intentionally deny the Qur'ān and who turn away from Belief? Having no concern for their own belief, the Shias revel in stating that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه had no

belief. Our plea to the Muslim public is that they should ponder over the verses quoted above so that they never fall into doubt when presented with the Shia fallacy.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mughaffal رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Fear Allāh with regard to my companions رضى الله عنهم! Fear Allāh with regard to my companions رضى الله عنهم! Never make any of them a target after me. Whoever loves them, loves me because of his love for me, and whoever hates them, hates me because of his hatred for me. Whoever hurts them, hurts me and whoever hurts me, hurts Allāh. Soon Allāh shall seize the one who hurts Him." [*"Mishkāt" p. 554, from Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you see the person who reviles my companions رضى الله عنهم, then tell him, 'May Allāh's curse be on you on account of your evil.'" [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه quotes The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying, "Never revile my companions رضى الله عنهم because (their status is so high that) if any of you spend in charity the equivalent of Mount Uhud in gold, you will not attain (the reward) they attained for spending half a 'Mudd' in charity." [*"Mishkāt" p. 553, from Bukhari and Muslim*]

May Allāh save all Muslims from the evil of the Rawāfidh. Āmīn

سورة الحجرات

Madinan	Surah Al-Hujurat	Verses 18

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُقَدِّمُوا۟ بَيْنَ يَدَىِ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿1﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَرْفَعُوٓا۟ أَصْوَٰتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ ٱلنَّبِىِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا۟ لَهُۥ بِٱلْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿2﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَغُضُّونَ أَصْوَٰتَهُمْ عِندَ رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱمْتَحَنَ ٱللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿3﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنَادُونَكَ مِن وَرَآءِ ٱلْحُجُرَٰتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿4﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿5﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) O you who believe! Never proceed ahead of Allāh and His messenger. Fear Allāh, for verily Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing. (2) O you who believe! Never raise your voices above the voice of the messenger and do not speak to him loudly as you speak loudly with each other, lest your deeds be laid to waste without your realising it. (3) Verily those who lower their voices with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم are the ones whose hearts Allāh has purified for Piety. They shall have forgiveness and a tremendous reward. (4) Indeed most of those who call for you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] from outside the rooms have no understanding. (5) If they had exercised patience until you emerged towards them, it would have been best for them. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE ETIQUETTE OF BEHAVIOUR IN THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

The rooms in which the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives lived are referred to as the "Hujurāt". These were very small and constructed from palm trunks. The Surah is called Surah Hujurāt because of the mention of these rooms in the

fourth verse. In the above verses, Allāh outlines certain etiquette to be followed when in the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The first of these is contained in the verse: *"O you who believe! Never proceed ahead of Allāh and His messenger. Fear Allāh, for verily Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing."* This verse is extremely concise and includes a vast range of meanings. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean that the believers should await the word of Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم before venturing to say or do anything by themselves. They should act only on the instructions of Allāh and His the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه says that this verse was revealed in response to words of those who expressed the wish that some law be revealed with regard to certain matters. Allāh disliked this comment and revealed the above verse telling them not to speak ahead of Allah and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.4 p.209 & "Ibn Kathir" v.4 p.205*]

Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه has narrated from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zubayr رضى الله عنه that a group of people once came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and requested that he appoint one of them as Amīr (leader) of the rest. Before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could say anything, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه advised that Sayyidina Qa'qa bin Ma'bad رضى الله عنه be made the Amīr, while Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه advised that Sayyidina Aqra bin Hābis رضى الله عنه be made Amīr. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه said to Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه that he was merely opposing him. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه replied that he never intended to do so. As the altercation ensued between the two, their voices began to rise. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"O you who believe! Never proceed ahead of Allāh and His messenger..."* [*p.7 18*]

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that a large portion of the Surah was revealed at once to detail the etiquette to be observed in the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Muslims are told not to raise their voices above that of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and that they should never address the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the manner that they address each other, but should take care to be respectful. Allāh says, *"O you who believe! Never raise your voices above the voice of the messenger and do not speak to him loudly as you speak loudly with each other, lest your deeds be laid to waste without your realising it."* A narration of Bukhari (*p.7 18*) mentions that after this verse was revealed, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه would speak so softly before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he had to be asked to repeat himself.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once found Sayyidina Thābit bin Qais رضى الله عنه absent from his gathering. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked about his whereabouts, a companion رضى الله عنه volunteered to make enquiries. When the companion رضى الله عنه arrived at the house, he found Sayyidina Thābit bin Qais رضى الله عنه sitting in his house with his head bowed down. When the companion رضى الله عنه asked Sayyidina Thābit رضى الله عنه about the reason for his sadness, the latter replied, "I have a (natural) loud voice and my voice has been higher than that of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. I am therefore among the inmates of Hell." When the companion رضى الله عنه reported this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Holy Prophet صلى الله

عليه وسلم told him to tell Sayyidina Thābit رضى الله عنه that he is not from among the inmates of Hell but from among the dwellers of Heaven. [*Bukhari p. 510 & 718*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports that when the above verse was revealed, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه used to whisper to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم like a person sharing a secret. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zubair رضى الله عنه reports that after this verse was revealed, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه used to speak so softly to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to ask him what he had said. Thereafter, Allāh revealed the verse stating, *"Verily those who lower their voices with the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *are the ones whose hearts Allāh has purified for piety. They shall have forgiveness and a tremendous reward."*

The Arabic word "imtahana" (translated above as *"purified")* actually means "to test". The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" states that in this context, the word means "to purify", just as gold is purified from other alloys by smelting. In a like manner, Allāh had purified the hearts of the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم so that it would purely contain [iety. In such tones does Allāh speak about the illustrious prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم - yet the vile Shias choose to vilify them!

NOTE : Scholars state that it is Makrūh (*reprehensible*) to raise one's voice at the grave of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is still necessary to respect him because he is alive in his grave. A person should greet him in a lowered voice.

"Indeed most of those who call for you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] *from outside the rooms have no understanding."* The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has quoted several incidents pertinent to this verse. He narrates from Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه that some Arabs convened and decided, "Let us meet this person who claims to be a Prophet . If he is truly a Holy Prophet , we should attain the good fortune of believing in him ahead of others. If he is not a Prophet and is destined to be a king, we should still live under him (in any event, we will benefit by establishing a relationship with him)." When they came to Madinah, they began to shout out, "O Muhammad! O Muhammad!" The above verse was revealed with reference to these people.

According to a narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, some people from the Banu Ambar tribe arrived in Madinah and shouted aloud, "O Muhammad! Come out to meet us!" It was during the afternoon when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was taking a rest and he was awakened by the shouting. The above verse was then revealed.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports that the verse was revealed when some people of the Banu Tamīm tribe stood at the door of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم rooms and called for him to come out. The verse applies to all these incidents and admonishes the people involved saying, *"If they had exercised patience until you emerged towards them* (by yourself), *it would have been best for them. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Allāh will certainly forgive any person who commits an error.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ أَن تُصِيبُوا۟ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَـٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَـٰدِمِينَ ﴿6﴾

(6) O you who believe! If any sinner brings you any news, then verify it, lest you should harm any nation unknowingly and then become remorseful of your actions.

ALWAYS VERIFY THE NEWS YOU HEAR SO THAT YOU MAY NOT CAUSE HARM TO ANYONE

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.4 p.212*) reports that the above verse was revealed with regard to a Sahābi by the name of Sayyidina Walīd bin Uqba bin Abi Mu'īt رضى الله عنه. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commissioned him to collect the Zakāh of the Banu Mustaliq tribe. When the tribe heard that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sending someone, they waited for him outside the town to welcome him. During the period of ignorance, enmity existed between the Banu Mustaliq tribe and the same Walīd bin Uqba رضى الله عنه. Therefore, when he saw the tribe waiting for him outside the town, Satan made him believe that the tribe was waiting to kill him on account of the past prejudice. Alarmed by this thought, he turned back for Madinah and informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the tribe refused to pay Zakāh and intended to kill him.

Hearing this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم decided to declare Jihād *(religious war)* against the tribe. When they heard this, a delegation from the tribe met with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They said to him, "We heard that you were sending an envoy to collect the Zakāh, so we came out of the town to welcome him. We intended to hand over our Zakāh to him as Allāh had commanded. However, the envoy thought it best to turn back while still on the road. We feared that you may have become upset with us on some account and sent him a letter recalling him. We seek refuge with Allāh from His wrath and the wrath of His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم."

Unable to rely on their word, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه to the Banu Mustaliq with the instructions, "If these people are still living in Belief, then take their Zakāh from them. If not, then deal with them as you would deal with the disbelievers." When Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه arrived there, he found that they were all still Muslims and collected the Zakāh from them. When he returned and informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the situation, Allāh revealed the above verse stating, *"O you who believe! If any sinner brings you any news, then verify it* (before taking any action,) *lest you should harm any nation unknowingly and then become remorseful of your actions."*

Although the above incident was an isolated one, Allāh revealed the verse of the Qur'ān as an address to the entire mankind, telling them that every piece of information is not necessarily true. Therefore, one will have to establish the truth of every report and act only after the truth is ascertained. This applies to worldly matters as well as matter of religion. Only narrations of Ahadīth that are reported by truthful and pious Muslims are accepted. If the personality of the

narrator is unknown, he will be termed "Mastūrul Hāl" and his narration will not be accepted.

Quoting the above verse as substantiation, Imām Muslim رحمة الله عليه has written in the introduction of his book that the narration of a sinner (Fāsiq) will not be accepted.

وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِى كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْإِيمَـٰنَ وَزَيَّنَهُۥ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْكُفْرَ وَٱلْفُسُوقَ وَٱلْعِصْيَانَ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلرَّٰشِدُونَ ﴿٧﴾ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٨﴾

(7) Know well that the messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم is in your midst. There are many matters regarding which you will be placed in difficulty if he were to obey you people concerning them. However, Allāh has made Imān (Belief) beloved to you, has made it beautiful within your hearts and has made disbelief sin and disobedience abhorrent to you. These people are rightly guided. (8) This is on account of the grace and bounty from Allāh. Allāh is All Knowing, the Wise.

BY HIS GRACE AND BOUNTY, ALLĀH HAS MADE IMĀN BELOVED TO YOU AND HAS MADE DISBELIEF AND SIN HATEFUL

Reminding the believers of His tremendous favour on them, Allāh states, *"Know well that the messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم is in your midst."* In this regard, Allāh states in verse 164 of Surah Āl Imrān, *"Allāh has undoubtedly favoured the believers by sending in their midst a messenger from among them, who recites to them His verses, purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom."*

Allāh then tells the believers, *"There are many matters regarding which you will be placed in difficulty if he* [the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *were to obey you people concerning them."* There are many matters concerning which the opinions of people are wrong and would produce harmful results for them if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were to act according to their opinions.

Allāh then makes mention of another favour that He bestowed on the Believers. Allāh says, *"However, Allāh has made Imān(Belief) beloved to you, has made it beautiful within your hearts..."* The light of belief has illuminated their hearts, the effect of which is that no believer will ever forsake his Belief irrespective of the odds. In addition to this, Allāh says that He *"has made disbelief, sin and disobedience abhorrent to you."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that a person will taste the sweetness of Belief when the following three qualities are found in him/her:

1. *When Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم are more beloved to the person anything else.*
2. *When a person loves another for Allāh's sake.*

3. *S/he hates returning to disbelief as much as s/he hates being cast into a fire.* [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 7*]

Allāh then says about those in whose hearts Imān (*Belief*) is beloved and to whom disbelief and sin are abhorred, *"These people are rightly guided."*

Thereafter, Allāh adds that it was never incumbent on Him to bestow these favours upon the believers, but *"This is (solely) on account of the grace from Allāh and bounty. Allāh is All Knowing, the Wise."* Nothing is hidden from Allāh, Who bestows favours on His chosen bondsmen according to His infinite wisdom.

وَإِن طَآيِفَتَانِ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱقْتَتَلُوا۟ فَأَصْلِحُوا۟ بَيْنَهُمَا ۖ فَإِنۢ بَغَتْ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا عَلَى ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَٰتِلُوا۟ ٱلَّتِى تَبْغِى حَتَّىٰ تَفِىٓءَ إِلَىٰٓ أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن فَآءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا۟ بَيْنَهُمَا بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوٓا۟ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا۟ بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

(9) If two groups of believers fight each other, then reconcile between them. If the one group transgresses against the other, then fight that (transgressing) group until they return to Allāh's command. If they return, then reconcile between them with justice. Be just, for Allāh loves those who exercise justice. (10) The believers are all brothers, so reconcile between your brothers. Fear Allāh so that mercy may be shown to you.

IF TWO GROUPS OF BELIEVERS BEGIN TO FIGHT, THEY SHOULD BE RECONCILED BECAUSE ALL BELIEVERS ARE BROTHERS TO EACH OTHER

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه narrates that someone once suggested to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that it may prove beneficial if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمhimself approached Abdullāh bin Ubayy, who was the leader of the hypocrites. It was felt that in this event, Abdullāh bin Ubayy may forsake his opposition to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمand accept Islām. Consequently, mounting his donkey, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمleft with a party of Muslims to meet Abdullāh bin Ubayy.

After crossing a tract of barren land, they reached Abdullāh bin Ubayy. As they approached him, the hypocrite said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Please stay far from me because the stench of your donkey is upsetting me." In reply to this, one of the Ansār said, "By Allāh! The donkey of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمhas a much more fragrant smell than you." Upon hearing this, Abdullāh bin Ubayy's people became incensed and a war of words ensued between the two groups. This eventually lead to a few fists flying and little skirmish with branches and sandals. Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه says that they later learned that it was with reference to this incident that Allāh revealed the verse *"If two groups of believers fight each other, then reconcile between them."* [*Bukhari v.1 p.370*]

"Durrul Manthūr" has reported another incident as the reason for the revelation of this verse. There is no discrepancy between the two incidents because the verse could have been revealed with regar d to both.

Allāh says further, *"If (after reconciliation) the one group transgresses against the other, then fight that (transgressing) group until they return to Allāh's command (i.e. they abide by Allāh's command not to fight). If they return, then reconcile between them with justice. Be just, for Allāh loves those who exercise justice."* Once the transgressing group desists and abides by Allāh's command, the reconciling party should not oppress them in return, but they should resolve the situation with equity. Not only should the fighting be halted, but the two warring factions should be reconciled in a manner that their differences are effectively resolved. If this is not done, every possibility exists that another fight would break out between them.

When discord sets in between two Muslim parties, it becomes wājib *(compulsory)* for the Amīr–ul-Muminīn *(Leader of the believers)* to reconcile them and get them to obey the injunctions of the Qur'ān and Sunnah (*What the Holy prophet practise*). If any party rebels against the Leader of the believers *(Amīr–ul-Muminīn)*, their complaints should be listened to and their grievances duly addressed. If they conclusively prove that the Leader of the believer has oppressed them, it will be necessary for the Muslim public to support them so that the Leader of the believers desists from his oppression. However, if they cannot prove this and are prepared to settle the affair only with a fight, the Muslim public has to support the Leader of the believers in a battle against them. The details pertaining to this are found in the books of Islāmic jurisprudence like "Hidāyah" and others.

"The believers are all brothers..." This relationship of brotherhood is based on the common factor of belief that they all share. It is therefore necessary that they show due regard for this relationship, refrain from fighting and be ready always to forgive each other if any of them happen to forego the rights owed to another.

However, if the situation arises where two Muslim factions are prepâring to go to war with each other, it is necessary for other Muslims to make every effort to reconcile the two —as denoted by the verse *"so reconcile between your brothers."* In addition to this, Allāh advises the Muslims to *"Fear Allāh so that mercy may be shown to you."* If a person has fear for Allāh in his heart, he will conform to all the dictates of the Shari'ah, thereby attracting Allāh's mercy to himself.

Allāh states in verse 114 of Surah Nisā (*Surah 4*), *"There is no good in most of their secret consultations except in him who enjoins charity, a good deed or reconciliation between the people. Whoever does this seeking Allāh 's pleasure, then We shall soon confer on him an immense reward."* This verse makes it clear that consultations should take place for the above courses — one of the greatest being reconciliation between people. A person will be immensely rewarded for reconciling others, especially for reconciling husband and wife.

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once asked them, "Should I not inform you of something that is more virtuous than Optional fasting, charity and Optional Salāh?" When the companions of *(of the Holy prophet)* رضی اللہ عنہم begged to be informed, the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "It is to reconcile between people. Mutual enmity is a shaver." [*Abu*

Dawūd & Tirmidhi]

According to another narration, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that enmity shaves off one's religion. *["Mishkāt" p. 428, from "Musnad of Ahmad" and Tirmidhi*]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونُوا۟ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَآءٌ مِّن نِّسَآءٍ
عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ ۖ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا۟ بِٱلْأَلْقَـٰبِ ۖ بِئْسَ ٱلِٱسْمُ ٱلْفُسُوقُ
بَعْدَ ٱلْإِيمَـٰنِ ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ ﴿١١﴾ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ
ٱلظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا۟ وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن
يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا
خَلَقْنَـٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَـٰكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

(11) O you who believe! Men should not mock other men for perchance they may be better than them. Neither should any women mock other women, perchance they may be better than them. Never find faults with yourselves and do not call each other by derogatory names. It is indeed evil to be labeled with the name of sin after belief. Those, who do not repent are oppressors indeed. (12) O you who believe! Refrain from excessive assumption. Verily, some assumptions are a sin. Never spy and never backbite each other. Does any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother, which you so detest? Fear Allāh. Allāh is Most Pardoning, Most Merciful. (13) O people.' We have certainly created you from a single male and female and made you into various families and tribes so that you may recognise each other. Verily, the most honoured of you in Allāh's sight is the most abstinent one. Allāh is certainly All Knowing, Informed.

CERTAIN INJUNCTIONS RELEVANT TO SOCIAL CONDUCT

THE FIRST:

The First of many pieces of advice given to the believers in the above verses is contained in the words *"O you who believe! Men should not mock other men for perchance they may be better than them. Neither should any women mock other women, perchance they may be better than them."* Allāh addresses the believers in this manner because men ought to be associating with men and women with women. In no way does the verse denote that it is permissible for men to mock women and vice versa.

Allāh makes it clear that no person has the right to mock another. True virtue lies in Belief and good deeds when Allāh accepts these from a person. No person is aware of the inner condition of another person and about the intentions

and sincerity that another person has. None has any idea about the status another person enjoys in Allāh's estimation. This will be revealed only on the Day of Judgment. Therefore, it is very possible that a person may mock someone who emerges to be far superior than him (the mocker) on the Day of Judgment. Even if the person who is mocking gains conclusive knowledge about his success in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* and about the doom awaiting the one he is mocking, he still has no reason to mock. Worse than this is when he mocks without knowing what his own plight is to be in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*.

Mocking others is a sure sign of pride in the person who mocks because it indicates that the person considers himself free of the fault which he mocks. If a person keeps his own faults and shortcomings before him, he will find it impossible to mock others and backbite them. Another grave harm of mocking is the hurt it causes to others; which is unlawful in no uncertain terms.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Never fight with your brother, never mock him and never make a promise to him that you cannot fulfil." [*"Mishkāt" p. 412*]

It is permissible to joke with each other on condition that no lies are spoken and none is hurt. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to joke but would say that even in his jokes he spoke only the truth. [*"Mishkāt" p. 216*]

It should be borne in mind that mocking people is not only done verbally, but is also carried out by indications and gestures of the eyes or limbs. Such forms of mockery are also Unlawful. Allāh has condemned people who do this in the commentary of the first verse of Surah Humazah (*Surah 104*).

THE SECOND

The Second injunction Allāh expresses is contained in the verse *"Never find faults with yourselves..."* One should never disclose the physical defects of another person, neither verbally nor by gestures. The general wording of the verse also forbids publicising the faults of others. It is a common practice to imitate people with walking defects and to refer to them as crippled, or to tease people with other handicaps. It is imperative that Muslims refrain from this type of behaviour.

Sayyidah Safiyya رضى الله عنها, who was one of the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, was short in stature. Once, Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها mocked her height by telling the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that she [Sayyidah Safiyya رضى الله عنها] was only so tall, making a gesture with her hand. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her, "You have spoken a sentence which would putrefy the oceans if it were mixed with them." [*"Mishkāt" p. 414*]

It should be noted that Allāh does not say, "Never find faults with others", but He says *"Never find faults with yourselves..."* The reason for this is that all Muslims are like one body. Therefore, finding faults with any individual is tantamount to finding fault with oneself. It is also common that a person will reply to an insult by using the same words for the person who is insulting him. Therefore, the person finding fault is actually finding fault with himself because the insult is returned to him.

THE THIRD

The Third injunction is expressed as *"and do not call each other by derogatory names."* Examples of these are calling a Muslim a "Fāsiq" (sinner) or a disbeliever. Similarly, calling a person by a name that expresses something evil is also Unlawful, e.g. donkey, pig. It is also Unlawful to call a Muslim revert by his former religion, e.g. calling him a Jew or a Christian.

One of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives by the name of Sayyidah Safiyya رضى الله عنها was formerly a Jewess. Once, when her camel had died, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidah Zaynab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها, one of his other wives to give a camel to Sayyidah Safiyya رضى الله عنها. Sayyidah Zaynab رضى الله عنها exclaimed, "Should I give a camel to that Jewess!' the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم became so angry at the remark that he severed ties with Sayyidah Zaynab رضى الله عنها for the entire month of Dhul Hijjah, the month of Muharram and a part of Safar [*Abu Dawūd v.2 p.276*]. A narration of the "Musnad of Ahmad" (*v.6 p.337/8*) reports that this incident took place during the Hajj journey.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that calling a person by a derogatory name refers to a sin that he had previously committed and had already repented for; e.g. calling a person a crook, a drunkard, a prostitute; etc. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that when someone labels another because of a sin that the person committed, he (the person who labels) will not die until he is also found guilty of the same sin. [*"Mishkāt" p. 414*]

Allāh says further, *"It is indeed evil to be labelled with the name of sin after Belief."* When a Muslim mocks another person or finds fault with him/her, the Muslim will be regarded as a sinner (Fāsiq) and people may even call the Muslim by name of "sinner". He is therefore guilty of assuming the name of sinner for himself, which is terrible. A Muslim should always endeavour to be included in the list of the pious and righteous and never to be labelled as a sinner.

Allama Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has interpreted the verse to mean that a Muslim should never be labelled with a name that denotes a sin. Once a Muslim has repented for a sin, it is wrong to refer to him by the sin he committed; e.g. calling him a thief or a liar, etc. A Muslim revert should never be called a disbeliever in reference to what he was once.

THE FOURTH

The Fourth piece of advice that Allāh gives is *"Those who do not repent are oppressors indeed."* Such people are guilty of oppressing themselves because they are subjecting themselves to the everlasting doom of Hell.

THE FIFTH

The Fifth piece of advice that Allāh gives is when He says, *"O you who believe! Refrain from excessive assumption. Verily, some assumptions are a sin."* Assumptions pave the way for many sins such as slander and backbiting. When an assumption is allowed to develop, it leads to many evils and serious conflict between people. An assumption is nothing more than a personal opinion which

seldom proves to be true. Allāh declares in Surah Najm, *"assumptions are absolutely useless against the truth."* [*Surah 53, verse 28*]

One should always entertain good opinions of Muslims and refrain from harbouring ill thoughts about any Muslim. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Beware of suspicion because suspicion is the falsest of all statements."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 427*]

It should be noted that when a person fears that another person may cause harm to him and avoids the person as a precaution, his attitude will not be regarded as a sinful assumption. At the same time, he should not backbite the person, nor allow the assumption to escalate to the degree of conviction (i.e. he cannot be convinced that the person will really cause harm to him).

The verse makes it clear that all types of opinions about others are not sinful because Allāh says that "some assumptions are a sin." There are therefore also those 'assumptions' that are encouraged, e.g. having the good opinion about Allāh that He is Most Merciful and Forgiving while also abstaining from sins. It is also necessary for a Muslim to entertain a favourable opinion about fellow Muslims, especially about righteous Muslims. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Good opinions are part of good worship." [*"Mishkāt" p. 479, from the "Musnad of Ahmad" and Abu Dawūd*]

It is imperative for Muslims to stay away from such places that will lead others to suspect him of evil. Similarly, he should also abstain from all deeds and words that will also lead to such suspicions. It is not appropriate for a Muslim to live under a cloud of suspicion.

THE SIXTH

The Sixth command that Allāh issues is that Muslims should *"Never spy"*. A person should never endeavour to unravel what another person does privately and should never search for another's faults. A person who spies on others will be punished in both worlds and will be disgraced in both worlds. Spying is usually prompted by suspicion, which has been outlawed in the same verse.

A Muslim is one who conceals the faults of his Muslim brother and never seeks to pursue the matter to condemn the person. Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person sees something in another which he deems inappropriate to disclose and conceals it, he will receive the great reward of bringing back to life an infant girl who was buried alive." [*"Mishkāt" p. 424*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once mounted the pulpit and called out aloud, *"O those who have verbally accepted Islām, but in whose hearts Belief has not reached! Do not harm the Muslims, do not insult them and never spy on their private lives. The person who seeks to expose a hidden fault of another, Allāh will expose him until he will be disgraced even in his own home."* [*Tirmidhi*]

To investige a person's faults or sins is also regarded as spying. One will also be regarded as a spy when one pretends to be sleeping with the intention of listening to the private discussions of others. All forms of spying are Unlawful.

THE SEVENTH

The Seventh instruction is *"and never backbite each other. Does any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother, which you so detest?"* This part of the verse equates backbiting to eating the flesh of a person's dead brother, which is a vile and abhorrent act. Therefore, just as people detest this cannibalistic act, they should also detest the act of backbiting. Backbiting is a serious offence in the Shari'ah and is sadly perpetrated even by people who regularly perform their Salāh and are regarded as being *'pious'*. They fail to realise the gravity of this deed in this world, but will be harshly reminded in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Then it will be too late for regrets.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once asked the companions رضی اللہ عنہم, *"Do you know what backbiting is?"* "Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم know best," was the reply. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم then said, *"To mention such a thing about your brother which he dislikes."* One of the companion's رضی اللہ عنہم asked, "What if (the thing mentioned) is to be found within the person?" The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, *"If it is in him, you have backbitten him and if it is not in him, then you have slandered him."* [*Muslim v.2 p.323*]

This hadith makes it clear that even expressing a sin or a fault that is truly in a person constitutes backbiting *(Ghī bah)*. If the person is innocent of the sin or fault, the crime will be doubled because the offender will be guilty of slander as well as backbiting *(Ghī bah)*. It is also learned from the hadith that one will be guilty of backbiting *(Ghī bah)* even though one mentions the fault/sin in front of the person concerned. The only condition for a statement to qualify as backbiting *(Ghī bah)* is that it should be disliked by the person it is directed at - irrespective of whether it is stated in front of him/her or behind his/her back. This should be noted by those people who speak ill of people in their absence and, when they are cautioned about making backbiting *(Ghī bah)*, they say, *"I am stating no wrong and can say this to his face as well!"*

Slander will also be regarded as a type of backbiting *(Ghī bah)* because it is disliked by the person it is directed against. Satan has beguiled many a person into repeatedly committing this major sin of backbiting *(Ghī bah)* yet thay are still under the impression that they are not guilty of any sin. Because backbiting *(Ghī bah)* infringes the rights of fellow man, one has to be extremely wary of it.

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once mentioned that backbiting *(Ghī bah)* is worse than adultery. When someone asked the reason for this, the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, *"When a person commits adultery and repents to Allāh, Allāh will forgive him. However, if he perpetrates* backbiting *(Ghī bah), he will not be forgiven until he is first forgiven by the person against whom he had spoken ill."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 415*]

When a person backbites, he violates Allāh's rights because Allāh had forbidden it for him. At the same time, he violates the rights of fellow man because he is bringing disrepute to someone. It is therefore necessary that together with Taubah (*repentance*), the backbiter should also seek pardon from the person about whom s/he abused. Our learned scholars have stated that a person needs to seek pardon from the offended party only when the offended party has come to learn of the offence. However, if the backbitten person has no

knowledge of the backbiting, the backbiter should seek forgiveness from Allāh on behalf of the backbitten person until his heart is content that he has redressed the wrong of backbiting.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the expiation for backbiting is to pray for the forgiveness of the person who was backbitten by saying, *"Allāhummagh Firli Walah" ("Ó Allāh! Forgiven me and him").* [*"Mishkāt" p. 415*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that on the night in which he was taken on Mi'rāj (*Ascension*), he saw some people whose nails were of copper. They were constantly tearing their faces and chests with these nails. When Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام about the identity of these people, he was informed that these are people who plundered the honour of others. [*Abu Dawūd v.2 p.3 13*]

Just as it is Unlawful to engage in backbiting *(Ghī bah)*, it is also Unlawful to listen to backbiting *(Ghī bah)*. When a person hears another engage in backbiting, it will be necessary for the listener to forbid the backbiter and to speak in defence of the person being backbitten. Sayyidah Asmā bint Yazīd رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"When a person defends someone whose flesh is being consumed by backbiting, it will be binding on Allāh to save him from the fire of Hell."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 424*]

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person defends the honour of his (Muslim) brother, it will be binding on Allāh to save him from the fire of Hell on the Day of Judgment." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited the Qur'ānic verse: "Assisting the believers is a bounden duty upon Us." [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person defends a 'Mu'min (*believer*) from the words of a hypocrite, Allāh will appoint an angel on the Day of Judgment who will protect his flesh from the fire of Hell. When a person exposes a fault of a Muslim, Allāh will halt him on the bridge of Hell until he is able to emerge from what he said i.e. seek pardon from the offended party and redress the situation." [*Abu Dawūd v.2 p.3 13*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abu Talha رضى الله عنه have both narrated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when a Muslim's honour is being plundered at any place and another person present there does not assist him (by replying to the accusations), Allāh will not help him (the person failing to defend) on the day when he will most hope for help. On the other hand, when a person will assist a Muslim at a place where the Muslim's honour is being plundered, Allāh will assist him on the day when he will most wish for Allāh's assistance. [*"Mishkāt" p. 424*]

"Does any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother, which you so detest?" With relevance to this verse, the following incident is reported about a companion *(of the Holy prophet)* by the name of Sayyidina Mā'iz رضى الله عنه. When he committed the sin of adultery, he confessed the sin before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on four occasions. He was eventually condemned to be stoned to

death. As people were returning from the stoning, someone mentioned to his companion, "Look at him. Allāh concealed his sin but he did not leave matters to rest until he has to be stoned like a dog." Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم overheard this remark, he kept silent. As they walked on a bit further, they passed by the carcass of a donkey, the foreleg of which was raised. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then called for the person who had made the remark and the one who had listened to him. When they presented themselves before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he said to them, *"Dismount and eat from this carcass."* They entreated, *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Who can possibly eat from this?"* *the* Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The dishonour that you had brought to your brother a while ago is much worse than eating this carcass. I swear by the Being in Whose control is my life! He [Sayyidina Maa'iz رضى الله عنه] is presently diving in the rivers of Heaven."* [*Abu Dawūd v.2 p.252*]

This hadith proves that backbiting about dead people is as bad as backbiting about living people.

NOTE: Backbiting *(Ghī bah)* is not only confined to verbal utterances. Gestures with the eyes and limbs, as well as mimicking a person will also be regarded as backbiting *(Ghī bah)*. Backbiting about a person's children or a person's wife constitutes double backbiting *(Ghī bah)* because a person is backbiting about the father as well as the child, and the husband as well as the wife. It is unfortunate that there are so many people who have a penchant for backbiting and would speak ill of people to anyone at any time. Such people have no concern for the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* at all.

NOTE : If one cautions others about the evil of a certain person so that they save themselves from him, it will not be regarded as backbiting *(Ghī bah)*.

THE EIGHTH

The Eighth advice is contained in the words: *"Fear Allāh (by abstaining from everything He has forbidden). Allāh is Most Pardoning, Most Merciful."* Allāh will forgive any person who sincerely repents to Him irrespective of his sins.

THE NINTH

The Ninth advice imparted is *"O people! We have certainly created you from a single male and female and made you into various families and tribes so that you may recognise each other."* By creating people in this manner, people are able to recognise each other as members of different tribes and families. Everyone is equal as human beings because they are all the progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and Sayyidah Hawwā عليها السلام. The only distinction is by virtue of piety, as Allāh says, *"Verily, the most honoured of you in Allāh's sight is the most abstinent one."*

Allāh has decreed that virtue be judged on the basis of piety. It is tragic that despite this decree, people still regard others as being honourable because of their lineage and social status even though the person may be immersed in sin

and lives on Unlawful earnings. Although people may lead such type of irreligious lives, they pride themselves for being from the lineage of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه, Sayyidina Uthmān رضی الله عنه, Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه and the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم. Their ways of life are typical of the enemies of Islām and have no semblance to the religion brought by their acclaimed forefathers, yet they boast about their lineage. Clean shaven people wearing suits and ties are given honour in society because of their social standing whereas pious and righteous people are treated disrespectfully and looked down upon.

There are also those people who regard themselves to be superior to others because of the colour of their skin or their nationality. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, *"You are not better than a white person nor a black person unless you excel in Piety."* [*"Musnad of Ahmad" v.5 p. 108*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم once climbed on top of Mount Safa and addressed the Quraysh with the following words, *"Save yourselves from Hell because I cannot be of assistance to you on the Day of Judgment."* the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم individually addressed the Banu Ka'b, Banu Murrah, Banu Abdush Shams, Banu Abd Manāf, Banu Hāshim and Banu Abdul Muttalib, who were all families of the Quraysh. Similarly, he also addressed his maternal uncle Abbās رضی الله عنه, his maternal aunt Safiyya رضی الله عنها and his daughter Fātima رضی الله عنها with these words. [*"Mishkāt" p. 470, from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Family lineage will be of no avail on the Day of Judgment. It will be only Belief and good deeds that will save a person from Hell. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم' s intercession will profit the only believers on the Day of Judgment. People only fool themselves by thinking that they can continue committing sins because they have a noble lineage. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم once said, "Allāh has put an end to the haughtiness of the period of ignorance from you people as well as the pride you had for your forefathers. Now there is either only a pious believer or a wretched sinner. Every man is the son of Ādam علیه السلام and Ādam علیه السلام was created from sand." [*"Mishkāt" p. 418, from Abu Dawūd and Tirmidhi*]

Explaining the words *"so that you may recognise each other"*, the author of *"Bayānul Qur'ān"* mentions some of the benefits of people being divided into tribes and families. People with the same names can be distinguished from each other only by their relationship with different families. It by this relationship that people can discern their close relatives from their distant relatives. In this manner, they will be able to duly fulfil the rights they owe to their relatives - especially with regard to the laws of inheritance. When a person is aware of his lineage, he will not associate himself with another family, which has been prohibited in the Ahadīth.

THE TENTH

The Tenth advice that Allāh gives is *"Allāh is certainly All Knowing, Informed."* People should always be conscious that Allāh is Aware of everything at all times. Allāh knows exactly who possesses true belief, who is involved in sin and what every person's state will be in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. Every person should concern himself with belonging to the group of pious and righteous

Muslims whose reckoning will be easy on the Day of Judgment.

۞ قالت الأعراب آمنا قل لم تؤمنوا ولكن قولوا أسلمنا ولما يدخل الإيمان في قلوبكم وإن تطيعوا الله ورسوله لا يلتكم من أعمالكم شيئا إن الله غفور رحيم (14) إنما المؤمنون الذين آمنوا بالله ورسوله ثم لم يرتابوا وجاهدوا بأموالهم وأنفسهم في سبيل الله أولئك هم الصادقون (15) قل أتعلمون الله بدينكم والله يعلم ما في السماوات وما في الأرض والله بكل شيء عليم (16) يمنون عليك أن أسلموا قل لا تمنوا علي إسلامكم بل الله يمن عليكم أن هداكم للإيمان إن كنتم صادقين (17) إن الله يعلم غيب السماوات والأرض والله بصير بما تعملون (18)

(14) The villagers say, "We have faith." Say, "You do not have faith but rather say, 'We have accepted Islām' because faith (Imān) has not yet entered your hearts." If you obey Allāh and His messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh will not reduce your actions in the least. Verily Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (15) The believers are those who believe in only Allāh and His messenger and then have no doubts; and they strive with their wealth and lives in Allāh's path. These are the ones who are true. (16) Say, "Are you telling Allāh about your religion when Allāh has knowledge of whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth? Allāh has knowledge of everything." (17) [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] they boast about their favour to you that they have accepted Islām. Say, "Do not boast to me about your acceptance of Islām. Rather it was Allāh Who favoured you by guiding you to faith, if you are truthful." (18) Verily Allāh has knowledge of the unseen things in the heavens and the earth and Allāh Sees what you do.

A WORD OF CAUTION TO THOSE WHO MERELY CLAIM TO HAVE ACCEPTED ISLĀM

It is reported in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" that the "villagers" mentioned in the above verse refers to some people of the Banu Asad tribe. They arrived in Madinah during years of drought and professed to be Muslims, but were not actually so. They used to scatter dirt in the streets of Madinah and were instrumental in raising the prices of commodities. They attended the gatherings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم morning and evening, constantly reminding the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that whereas other Arabs only presented themselves in Madinah, they had come with all their wealth and families as well. They also kept telling the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they did not fight him as certain other tribes did. In this manner, they continued boasting about their "favours" to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and asked him to spend the incoming Zakāh on

them. Allāh then revealed the above verse with reference to them.

Allāh states, *"The villagers say, 'We have faith.' Say, 'You do not have faith (within your hearts) but rather say, 'We have (superficially) accepted Islām' because faith (Belief) has not yet entered your hearts.'"* The outward physical actions of Islām do not necessarily denote the presence of true belief within the heart. True belief denotes deep-rooted faith within the heart. Referring to the hypocrites in verse 8 of Surah Baqarah, Allāh says, *"Among people there are those who say, 'We believe in Allāh and in the Final Day,' whereas they are not believers."* Belief comprises of conviction within the heart coupled with verbal attestation of the same. If a person verbally attests to be a believer without having the conviction in his heart, he will be a hypocrite.

On the other hand, if a person has the conviction but does not verbally attest to this, he will also not be a believer. Speaking about the disbelievers of the people of Fir'oun *(phara'oh)*, Allāh says in Surah Naml, *"They unjustly and arrogantly rejected them (Allāh 's signs) whereas their souls were convinced about them. So see what the outcome of the anarchists shall be."* [*Surah 27, verse* 14]

There are many people who claim to be Muslims without having the necessary conviction in their hearts. Although they may be able to fool the Muslims in this world, Allāh does not regard them as believers.

Allāh states further, *"If (inwardly and outwardly) you obey Allāh and His messenger* صلى الله عليه وسلم*, Allāh will not reduce (the rewards of) your actions in the least."* In fact, Allāh will compound the reward of good deeds by at least tenfold. Good deeds will profit a person only when s/he possesses belief. Merely claiming to have belief is insufficient and will render all one's deeds null and void in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)*. However, it should be noted that *"Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Therefore, if a person sincerely accepts Islām and repents, Allāh will forgive him.

Allāh then described the believers when He says, *"The believers are only those who (sincerely) believe in Allāh and His messenger and then have no doubts; and they strive with their wealth and lives in Allāh's path."* This refers to physically fighting the disbelievers in Jihād, as well as fighting one's carnal self to carry out good deeds and to abstain from sins. It also refers to making an effort to make sure that one's family and subordinates adhere to the injunctions of the Shari'ah.

Passing an accolade, Allāh says, *"These are the ones who are true"* i.e. they are true to their word when they claim to possess belief and are not like the hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*.

It should be noted that Allāh describes the believers as people who not only believe in Allāh, but who also believe in Allāh's messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم. Believing only in oneness of Allāh without believing in the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is not regarded as belief in Allāh's sight. The belief which will guarantee salvation in the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* has to include belief in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This verse therefore disproves the theory of those people who wish to merge all religions on the basis of belief in oneness of Allāh only.

People need not make claims to Allāh that they have believed because Allāh

has knowledge of everything Allāh knows well who is true in their Belief and who is not. It is with reference to this that Allāh says, *"Say, 'Are you telling Allāh about your religion when Allāh has knowledge of whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth? Allāh has knowledge of everything.*

It is reported in *'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" that* after the above verse was revealed, the same villagers of the Banu Asad came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and attested that they really did accept Islām with sincere hearts. Allāh then revealed the verse "[O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] They boast about their favour to you that they have accepted Islām. Say, *"Do not boast to me about your acceptance of Islām. Rather it was Allāh Who favoured you by guiding you to faith; if you are truthful (in your claim that you have really accepted Islām with sincere hearts)."* People therefore have to be thankful to Allāh for guiding them to Islām.

With regard to the verse *"They boast about their favour to you that they have accepted Islām* - it may be asked that these people said, "We have faith" and not *"We have accepted Islām."* Why has Allāh expressed their statement of *"We have faith"* as "they have accepted Islām"? One of the reasons for this is that Allāh wishes to emphasise the fact that these people were also insincere the second time as well when they told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they really did accept Islām with sincere hearts. Another reason that comes to mind is that Allāh wishes to tell these people that even since sincere believers do not have the right to boast about their 'favour' to Allāh in accepting Islām, how can they do such a thing when their belief is false?

The verse is a lesson to Muslims until the Day of Judgment that they have accepted Islām for their own benefit and cannot boast that they have done a favour to Islām or the Muslims in doing so. They therefore cannot demand funds or food from the Muslims on this basis. Of course, the Muslims will make every effort to assist them as far as possible, but they should never demand assistance. Each person is obliged to earn for himself.

Allāh concludes the Surah by once more reminding mankind that *"Verily Allāh has knowledge of the unseen things in the heavens and the earth and Allāh Sees what you do."* Man should therefore be wary of whatever he does.

سورة ق

Makkan	Surah Qāf	Verses 45

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

قٓ ۚ وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ ٱلْمَجِيدِ (1) بَلْ عَجِبُوٓا۟ أَن جَآءَهُم مُّنذِرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَقَالَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ هَٰذَا شَىْءٌ عَجِيبٌ (2) أَءِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ۖ ذَٰلِكَ رَجْعٌۢ بَعِيدٌ (3) قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنقُصُ ٱلْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ ۖ وَعِندَنَا كِتَٰبٌ حَفِيظٌۢ (4) بَلْ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِٱلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ فَهُمْ فِىٓ أَمْرٍ مَّرِيجٍ (5) أَفَلَمْ يَنظُرُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَٰهَا وَزَيَّنَّٰهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِن فُرُوجٍ (6) وَٱلْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَٰهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَٰسِىَ وَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍۭ بَهِيجٍ (7) تَبْصِرَةً وَذِكْرَىٰ لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُّنِيبٍ (8) وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً مُّبَٰرَكًا فَأَنۢبَتْنَا بِهِۦ جَنَّٰتٍ وَحَبَّ ٱلْحَصِيدِ (9) وَٱلنَّخْلَ بَاسِقَٰتٍ لَّهَا طَلْعٌ نَّضِيدٌ (10) رِّزْقًا لِّلْعِبَادِ ۖ وَأَحْيَيْنَا بِهِۦ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْخُرُوجُ (11)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) Qāf. By the oath of the Glorious Qur'ān (you will certainly be resurrected). (2) Yet they are astonished that a warner has come to them from among themselves. So the disbelievers say, "This is something strange. (3) "Will we be brought back to life after we have become sand? This resurrection is certainly farfetched!" (4) We know what the earth diminishes of them and with Us is the protected book. (5) They falsify the truth when it comes to them and are in a confused state. (6) Have they not looked at the sky above them and seen how We have made it, beautified it and that it has no cracks? (7) And (have they not looked at) the earth which We have spread out placed massive mountains on it and have grown on it every type of magnificent thing? (8) (These are all) eye-openers and reminders for every penitent slave. (9) We have sent blessed rains from the sky and have grown with it gardens, harvested grains... (10) .... and tall date palms with interwoven branches. (11) (These are all) as a provision for man. And We have revived dead land therewith (with the rains). Such shall the

resurrection be.

ALLĀH'S CREATIVE POWERS, HIS BOUNTIES AND THE FALSIFICATION OF THE DISBELIEVERS

Surah Qāf contains proofs of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd),* mention of Judgment day, its occurrence, description and the plight of the disbelievers and believers. The Surah also contains mention of nations that were destroyed in the past.

"By the oath of the Glorious Qur'ān (you people will definitely be resurrected)." Allāh revealed the Qur'ān so that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم may use it to warn the people. However, not stopping at falsifying the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the people even falsified the Qur'ān itself. They behaved haughtily and pretended to be astonished at the fact that Allāh had sent a Prophet from among their own people. In addition to this they also said, *"Will we be brought back to life after we have become sand? This resurrection is certainly farfetched!"*

In reply to their surprise at the resurrection, Allāh says, *"We know what the earth diminishes of them."* Allāh has perfect knowledge about the flesh, limbs and organs of their bodies that the earth will decompose after their deaths.

"...and with Us is the protected book." In this book (the *'Lowhul Mahfūz (the protected tablet)"),* records are kept of every occurrence that has taken place and will take place. Allāh knows exactly which portions of every being's body is in which portion of the earth and whether it has become food to any animal or any creature. All the scattered portions of every being will be collected together on the Day of Judgment, once again formed into the being, the soul replaced and the body brought back to life. Allāh created the creation, gave life to them and then caused them to die. It is therefore simple for Him to bring them back to life on the Day of Judgment.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person is buried, every part of his body disintegrates except a portion of his spine (the coccy). It will be from this bone that the body will be formed again on the Day of Judgment." [*"Mishkāt" p. 481*]

"They falsify the truth when it comes to them..." The polytheists were unable to understand resurrection. When Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to guide them and he proved his apostleship to them with various miracles, they still adamantly falsified him. They were therefore guilty of the multiple crime of rejecting the truth as well as the messenger of the truth. It is for this reason that they *"are in a confused state."* They were therefore prone to contradicting their own statements. They sometimes claimed that a human being cannot be a Prophet and sometimes said that a wealthy person should have been a Prophet instead. Sometimes they labelled the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a poet, sometimes as a magician and sometimes a madman.

Allāh dispels their doubts in His creative powers by saying, *"Have they not looked at the sky above them and seen how We have made it (without any supporting pillars), beautified it (with the stars) and that it has no cracks?"* Allāh Ta'āla asks further whether these people have not seen *"the earth which We have spread out,*

placed massive mountains on it and have grown on it every type of magnificent thing (plants, trees, vegetation, etc)?"

"(These are all) eye-openers and reminders for every penitent slave." By pondering over these tremendous creations of Allāh, man ought to recognise Allāh's greatness.

Allāh continues to say, *"We have sent blessed rains from the sky and have grown with it gardens, harvested grains and tall date palms with interwoven branches."* The branches of the date palm grow systematically layer by layer, with the dates well protected at the top. Allāh then states that He has created all of these "as a provision for man."

In addition to this, *"We have revived dead land with it (with the rains). Such shall the resurrection be.* "Just as Allāh revives dead land with the rains and causes various types of vegetation to grow, He can also revive dead bodies on the Day of Judgment. This verse is the culmination of the proof being presented to those who doubt the occurrence of resurrection. They are being told that the manifestations of Allāh's creative powers are before them every day yet they refute His ability to re-create creation!

Allāh says in Surah Rūm, *"So look at the signs of Allāh's mercy and how He revives the earth after it's death. Undoubtedly, He gives life to the dead and He has power over all things."* [*Surah 30, verse 50*]

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلرَّسِّ وَثَمُودُ ﴿١٢﴾ وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ وَإِخْوَٰنُ لُوطٍ ﴿١٣﴾ وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْأَيْكَةِ وَقَوْمُ تُبَّعٍ كُلٌّ كَذَّبَ ٱلرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ وَعِيدِ ﴿١٤﴾ أَفَعَيِينَا بِٱلْخَلْقِ ٱلْأَوَّلِ بَلْ هُمْ فِى لَبْسٍ مِّنْ خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٥﴾

(12) The nation of Nūh عليه السلام, the people of "Rass" and the Thamud falsified before them. (13) So too did the Ād, Fir'aun and the people of Lūt عليه السلام. (14) As well as the people of "Aykah" and the nation of "Tubba ". Each one of them falsified their messengers so My warning came to pass. (15) Did We get tired with the first creation? No, yet they are in doubt concerning the new creation.

LEARNING LESSONS FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF PREVIOUS NATIONS

These verses warn people about the folly of previous nations who were content with their disbelief and believed that they will never be taken to task for their disbelief, evil deeds and falsification of their Anbiya (The Holy Prophets) عليهم السلام. However, they were all eventually destroyed when Allāh's punishment overtook them. The above verses mention a few of these unfortunate nations. The details of these nations are found in other Surahs. The people of *"Rass"* ("the people of the well") have been mentioned in Surah Furqān [*Surah 25, verse 38*], the people of *"Aykah"* are mentioned in Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verse 176*] and the nation of *"Tubba"* are mentioned in Surah Dukhān [*Surah 44, verse 37*].

Allāh says about them, *"Each one of them falsified their messengers so My warning came to pass."* They were warned that they stood to face Allāh's punishment if they disbelieved, yet they took no heed.

Allāh then further dispels the doubt they have in the advent of resurrection by asking, *"Did We get tired with the first creation?"* Allāh never experiences fatigue. It is therefore impossible to think that Allāh is incapable of resurrecting people on the Day of Judgment because He became tired when He created them the first time. These people have no grounds to believe that Allāh is incapable of resurrecting creation. All they have are baseless doubts upon which they base their arguments. Allāh says, *"they are (merely) in doubt concerning the new creation."* These doubts are addressed time and again in the Qur'ān, yet they foolishly cling to them.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِۦ نَفْسُهُۥ ۖ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ ٱلْوَرِيدِ ﴿16﴾ إِذْ
يَتَلَقَّى ٱلْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ ٱلْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ ٱلشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ ﴿17﴾ مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴿18﴾
وَجَآءَتْ سَكْرَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ ﴿19﴾

(16) Verily, We have created man, We are aware of the whispers that enter his heart and We are closer to him than his jugular vein. (17) When the two receivers receive, sitting on his right and left hand sides. (18) Whenever a word escapes, there is a watcher ready by him. (19) The pangs of death will arrive with the truth. "This is what you used to avoid."

ALLĀH KNOWS THE WHISPERS OF THE HEART AND IS CLOSER TO MAN THAN HIS JUGULAR VEIN

Allāh begins these verses by stating, *"Verily, We have created man, We are aware of the whispers that enter his heart and We are closer to him than his jugular vein."* This means that Allāh is Aware of every condition that man experiences, even though it be the deepest secrets of the heart.

ANGELS HAVE BEEN APPOINTED TO RECORD MAN'S ACTIONS

Allāh then speaks of the angels that He has appointed to record every person's deeds. Despite the fact that Allāh has perfect knowledge of every deed that every person carries out, He has appointed an angel on the right of every person and another on the left who meticulously record every deed that a person carries out. It is with reference to these two angels that Allāh says, *"When the two receivers receive, sitting on his right and left hand sides."*

Allāh says in Surah Infitār, *"Honourable remembering scribes have been appointed over you who know what you do."* The registers of deeds that these angels record will be presented on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says in Surah Jāthiya, *"This is Our Book which speaks against you with the truth. Verily We used to have everything you did recorded."* [*Surah* 45, *verse* 29]

Allāh states further, *"Whenever a word escapes, there is a watcher ready by him."*

When a person utters a good word, the angel on his right side records it and when he utters a word of evil, the angel on his left side records it. Besides his words, every deed is recorded in this manner.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی اللہ عنہ and others have stated that these angels record only those good and evil deeds that are deserving of reward or punishment. They do not record permissible deeds that warrant neither rewards nor punishment. However it has also been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی اللہ عنہ that these angels record every deed that a person carries out, including the deeds that are not deserving of reward or punishment. They then present these deeds to Allāh every Thursday and only the deeds deserving reward or punishment are left in the registers. All other deeds are erased. After stating this, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی اللہ عنہ recited the following verse of Surah Rā'd, *"Allāh effaces what He wills."* [*Surah 13, verse 39*]

The general inference of the verse is that the deeds of the disbelievers are also recorded. After stating the above, the author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* quotes from *"Sharh Jowhara"* that the deeds of children are recorded and that no recording angels are appointed for insane people. Are recording angels appointed for the Jinn? Although certain Scholars have mentioned that angels are appointed for them, there is no conclusive narration to substantiate this. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 26 p. 180*]

THE PANGS OF DEATH

Allāh Ta'āla states further, *"The pangs of death will arrive with the truth."* When death will approach sinful people who dreaded its arrival, it will be said to them, *"This is what you used to avoid."* While they always tried to avoid death in every way and could not bear to even think of it, it arrived at its appointed hour to claim their souls. None can hope to escape death and the stages of the grave and the Ākhirah *(Hereafter)* that follow. Some of these stages will now be mentioned in the forthcoming verses.

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْوَعِيدِ (20) وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ (21) لَّقَدْ كُنتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَٰذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ (22) وَقَالَ قَرِينُهُ هَٰذَا مَا لَدَيَّ عَتِيدٌ (23) أَلْقِيَا فِي جَهَنَّمَ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ (24) مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ مُّرِيبٍ (25) الَّذِي جَعَلَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا آخَرَ فَأَلْقِيَاهُ فِي الْعَذَابِ الشَّدِيدِ (26) قَالَ قَرِينُهُ رَبَّنَا مَا أَطْغَيْتُهُ وَلَٰكِن كَانَ فِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ (27) قَالَ لَا تَخْتَصِمُوا لَدَيَّ وَقَدْ قَدَّمْتُ إِلَيْكُم بِالْوَعِيدِ (28) مَا يُبَدَّلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ (29)

(20) The trumpet will be sounded. This is the day you were warned about. (21) Every soul shall come with a driver and a witness. (22) "You were certainly negligent about this. We have removed your veils from you and your vision is

ever sharp today." (23) His companion shall say, "This is what I have ready." (24) "Throw every obstinate disbeliever into Hell." (25) "Everyone who prevented good, who was rebellious and who created doubts... (26) "...who ascribed another deity with Allāh. So fling him into a severe punishment." (27) His companion will say, "O our Lord! I did not mislead him but he was in distant deviation." (28) Allāh shall say, "Do not argue before me when I have already sent a warning to you." (29) "The decree that proceeds from Me shall never be altered and I do not oppress My slaves."

BLOWING THE TRUMPET AND RESURRECTION

Describing the scene on the Day of Judgment, Allāh says, *"The trumpet will be sounded. This is the day you were warned of. Every soul shall come with a driver and a witness."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes from Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه that the *"driver"* refers to the angel who will bring the person forth and the *"witness"* refers to the angels who will testify about the person's deeds. A hadith found in *"Hilyatul Awliyā"* states that one of the two recording angels will be the "driver" while the other will be the *"witness".*

According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, the disbelievers will then be told, *"You were certainly negligent about this. We have removed your veils from you and your vision is ever sharp today."* In the world, their hearts are veiled from realising the truth when they are invited towards belief and warned against the terrible consequences of disbelief and polytheism. They fail to take heed and turn a blind eye. However, these veils will be removed on the Day of Judgment and they will be able to see the truth very clearly.

"His companion shall say, 'This is what, I have ready.'" Who is this *"companion"*? Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمه الله عليه states that the *"companion"* will be the angel who recorded a person's evil deeds. He will point to the register of evil deeds saying that he has it ready for scrutiny.

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمه الله عليه states that the "companion" refers to the Satan that is appointed to accompany every person. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once informed the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم that every person has a Satan and an angel appointed to accompany him at all times. When the prophet's companions رضى الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether he also had these two companions, he replied, *"Yes, but Allāh assisted me against the Satan and he became a Muslim. He now advises me only to do good."* This hadith is supported by the following verse of Surah HāMīm Sajdah: *"We have delegated companions for them, who beautify for them whatever is before them and behind them."* [*Surah 41, verse 25*]

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL BE FLUNG INTO HELL

Allāh will then instruct the angels, *"Throw every obstinate disbeliever into Hell. Everyone who prevented good, who was rebellious and who created doubts..."* While many commentators state that those *"who prevented good"* refers to the disbelievers who prevented people from accepting Islām, others are of the opinion that it refers to people who did not pay Zakāh. These people used to create doubts in the hearts of others concerning Allāh's being, the Dīn *(religion)* of Islām and the advent of Judgment day. In addition to this, they were polytheists *"who ascribed another deity with Allāh."* As a result of their sinful behaviour, Allāh

will reiterate the command, *"So fling him into a severe punishment."*

When the disbeliever is flung into Hell, his companion who made evil attractive for him and who was responsible for misleading him will say, *"O our Lord! I did not (forcefully) mislead him but he was in distant deviation."* The companion will argue that the person fell prey to his guiles because he was inherently inclined towards evil. If this were not so, he would not have been affected. The companion was merely an aide to him and did not force him to resort to disbelief.

It is obvious that the "companion" is also a disbeliever who is destined for Hell. Since exonerating himself from blame will not save him from Hell, why will he make the plea, *"O our Lord! I did not mislead him but he was in distant deviation"?* In reply to this question, some Scholars have mentioned that the disbeliever will say this because he will not want to suffer the consequences of another person's evil deeds in addition to those of his own evil. However, his plea will be to no avail and he will have to suffer the consequences of misleading others as well. Allāh shall say to him, *"Do not argue before me when I have already sent a warning to you."* When Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was created, Allāh had already warned Iblīs (*chief Satan*) and all of mankind by saying, *"Whoever of them will follow you, I shall certainly fill Hell with the lot of you."* [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 18*]

Allāh will add, *"The decree that proceeds from Me shall never be altered and I do not oppress My slaves."* Therefore, in accordance with Allāh' s decree, the disbelievers will be cast into Hell.

NOTE : When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received the gift of fifty Salāh on the night of Mi'rāj (*Ascension*) and then had it reduced to five Salāh on the direction of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, Allāh said, "Although the Salāh will be five, the rewards earned shall remain fifty because every good deed earns a ten-fold reward. *'The decree that proceeds from Me shall never be altered."* [*"Mishkāt" p.* 529]

(30) (On that) day We shall ask Hell, "Are you full?" and she will reply, "Are there any more?" (31) And Heaven will be brought close to those who feared Allāh and will not be far off . (32) "This is what you have been promised for every penitent and conscientious person. (33) "The one who feared Allāh without seeing Him and has arrived with a heart that is attached to Allāh." (34) "Enter Heaven in peace. This is a day of eternity." (35) They shall have whatever they desire there and We even have something extra for them.

ALLĀH'S ADDRESS TO HELL AND HER REPLY

The dimensions of Hell are so vast that even after millions of men and Jinn are casts into it, it would still appear to be empty. Therefore, when Allāh will ask her, *"Are you ful?"*, it will reply in eager anticipation of more, *"Are there any more?"*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Heaven and Hell once engaged in a discussion when Hell proudly said, *"All the proud and aristocratic people will occupy me.* "Hearing this, Heaven said, "Why is it that the meek, downtrodden and simple people will occupy me?" Allāh addressed Heaven saying, *"You are My mercy and I shall use you to show mercy to whoever I please."* Then, addressing Hell,

Allāh said, "You are My punishment and I shall use you to punish whoever I please. Both of you have My promise that I shall fill you both," [*"Mishkāt" p. 505 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that Hell will continue repeating, *"Are there any more?"* as her inhabitants keep pouring in. Eventually Allāh will place His foot on Hell, causing it to recoil and plead, "Enough! Enough! I beg You by Your honour and munificence!" Heaven will also have space left as it is being filled. To fill Heaven, Allāh will create a new creation to occupy it."

Mention of Allāh's foot in this narration is among the *'Mutashābihāt"* and one should bear in mind that Allāh cannot be compared to the creation. Allāh knows best the meaning of such narrations and we should not bother to unravel their meanings.

In response to the above narration, it was once mentioned to a saint that the new creation to fill Hell will be extremely fortunate to enter Heaven immediately after being created. The saint replied, "What enjoyment can they experience when they have not experienced the hardships and difficulties of the world? How will they appreciate the comforts of Heaven? It will be we who will really experience enjoyment. We will be able to appreciate the comforts of Heaven that will be much greater than the comforts of this world because we know difficulties and have experienced them.

HEAVEN AND THE PEOPLE OF HEAVEN

Allāh says, *"And Heaven will be brought close to those who feared Allāh and will not be far off"* They will then be entered into Heaven and, seeing the bounties stored for them there, they will be told, *"This is what you have been promised for every penitent and conscientious person."* Heaven is the promised abode for those people who conscientiously obey Allāh's commands and avoid sin. Describing the people of Heaven further Allāh says, *"The one who feared Allāh without seeing Him and has arrived (in the Ākhirah (Hereafter)) with a heart that is attached to Allāh."* The primary concern of such a person is to please only Allāh.

It will then be said to them, *"Enter (Heaven) in peace. This is a day of eternity."* *i.e.* this is a day when a decision is passed that will affect their eternal existence. They will therefore be able to live eternally in Heaven.

SEEING ALLĀH IN HEAVEN

"They shall have whatever they desire there and We even have something extra for them." Besides having whatever they desire in Heaven, they will also receive things far beyond the limits of their imagination. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه quotes from Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه that *"something extra"* refers to seeing Allāh Himself.

Imām Muslim رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Suhayb رضى الله عنه a hadith which states that Allāh will ask the people of Heaven whether they require anything else in Heaven. They will reply by saying, *"You have illuminated our faces, entered us into Heaven and saved us from Hell. (What else could we want?)."* Allāh shall then remove the veil concealing Him and they will be able to see Him directly. There will be nothing so beloved to them as this. After mentioning this hadith, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the following verse of Surah Yunus [*Surah 10, verse 26*]: *"For those who do righteous deeds shall be The Best and more."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 5*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh says, *"I have prepared for My righteous bondsmen in Heaven such bounties that no eye has ever seen, that no ear has ever heard about and that has never crossed the mind of an human."* Thereafter, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمsaid, "If you please, you may recite the verse: *"No soul knows what pleasures are hidden for him as a reward for the deeds he carries out."* [*Surah Sajdah (32), verse 17*]

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُم بَطْشًا فَنَقَّبُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ هَلْ مِن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَن كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَمَا مَسَّنَا مِن لُّغُوبٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَارَ السُّجُودِ ﴿٤٠﴾

(36) How many were the nations that We destroyed before them who were mightier than them? So they journeyed through the cities (calling with concern) "Is there any escape?" (37) There is certainly a reminder in this for him who has a heart or who listens attentively. (38) We have created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two in six days without fatigue even remotely touching Us. (39) Patiently bear whatever they say and glorify the praises of your Lord before sunrise and before sunset. (40) Glorify Him during a portion of the night as well and after prostration.

LEARNING LESSONS FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF PREVIOUS NATIONS

Allāh speaks of past nations that were destroyed when He says, *"How many were the nations that We destroyed before them who were mightier than them?"* Many

of the previous nations were much more powerful than the Quraysh of Makkah. Among these powerful nations that were destroyed was the Ād. Describing their phenomenal strength, Allāh quotes Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام who said to the Ād, *"And, when you seize control, you seize like tyrants."* [*Surah Shu'arā (26), verse 130*]

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Surah Muhammad, Allāh says, *"Many were the towns that were more powerful than your town which drove you out. We destroyed them and they had none to assist them."* [*Surah 47, verse 13*]

Allāh continues, *"So they journeyed through the cities (desperately calling out) 'Is there any escape?'"* When the time drew close for their punishment, their strength and resources were useless to them and they searched for safety. However, there was no escape and they were eventually destroyed.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes some commentators who say that the verse *"So they journeyed through the cities. "Is there any escape?"* refers to the people of Makkah. This means that the Makkans frequently journeyed through the ruins that were once powerful civilisations. Allāh asks them whether, after passing these ruins so often, they ever noticed a means of escape from His punishment, which they could use when punishment afflicts them. Since it is obvious that there is no escape, why are they still adamant to practise disbelief?

Allāh continues to say, *"There is certainly a reminder in this for him who has a heart and who listens attentively."* i.e. for a person whose ears and heart are attentive and willing. Those people whose hearts are not willing to accept any advice and who are inattentive cannot benefit from the advice given to them.

"We have created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two in six days without fatigue even remotely touching Us." A weak person will get exhausted after doing some work. Since Allāh is most Mighty and Powerful, it is impossible for Him to experience fatigue. This verse refutes the foolish statement of the Jews who said that Allāh began creating the universe on a Saturday, completed it on a Friday and then rested on Saturday (Allāh forbid!).

"Patiently bear whatever they say and glorify the praises of your Lord before sunrise and before sunset." Commentators mention that this verse refers to the Fajr Salāh and the Asr Salāh, both of which have special significance. Sayyidina Umārah bin Rubiyyah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The person who performs Salāh before sunrise and before sunset shall never enter Hell."* [*"Mishkāt" p. 62*]

"Glorify Him during a portion of the night [i.e. in Tahajjud Salāh (supererogatory prayer)] as well and after prostration." Some commentators have mentioned that "after prostration" refers to performing Optional Salāh after Fardh (*obligatory*) Salāh. Others state that it refers to engaging in Tasbīhāt (*the act of praising Allāh*) after Salāh. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that "before sunrise" refers to the Fajr Salāh, "before sunset" *refers to Zuhr and Asr Salāh*, "a portion of the night" refers to Maghrib and Isha, while *"after prostration"* refers to Optional Salāh.

وَٱسْتَمِعْ يَوْمَ يُنَادِ ٱلْمُنَادِ مِن مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ﴿٤١﴾ يَوْمَ يَسْمَعُونَ ٱلصَّيْحَةَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ

(41) Listen attentively. The day when the caller shall call from a near place. (42) The day when people shall hear the screech in truth. This is the day of resurrection. (43) Indeed it is only We who give life and death and to Us shall be the return. (44) The day when the earth shall cleave open from above them (above their graves) and they will be running. This shall be a gathering very easy for Us. (45) We know best what they say and you are not one to force them. Warn by means of this Qur'ān him who fears My threat.

THE BEGINNING OF THE JUDGMENT DAY AND A CONSOLATION TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Allāh Ta'āla introduces His description of the advent of Judgment day by telling the reader, *"Listen attentively!"* The reader is therefore advised to pay attention to the ensuing verses and take heed. Allāh continues to say, *"The day when the caller shall call from a near place.* "The "caller" refers to the angel Sayyidina Isrāfīl عليه السلام who will blow the trumpet to announce the advent of Judgment day. The sound of the trumpet shall be heard by all near and far and it will seem to all that it is being blown from a nearby place. It will be heard simultaneously by all the living and dead in the heavens and on earth.

People who lived in the past could not understand how a distant sound could appear to be nearby and heard simultaneously throughout the world. With today's technological advancements, however, this is no longer farfetched. For example, a person speaking on a telephone may be far away but sounds as if s/he is no more than a meter away.

"The day when people shall hear the screech in truth. This is the day of resurrection." This refers to the second blowing of the trumpet, which is sure to take place. When the trumpet is blown for the second time, creation will be resurrected. Unlike the sounds of this world that reach some people without reaching others, every soul will hear the sound of the trumpet.

"Indeed it is only We who give life and death and to Us shall be the return." Every person will have to return to Allāh and none can hope to escape. *"The day when the earth shall cleave open from above them (as they lie in their graves) and they will be running. This shall be a gathering very easy for Us."*

Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"We know best what they say and you are not one to force them (to believe). Warn by means of this Qur'ān him who fears My threat."* the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم duty was to convey the message to everyone irrespective of whether they listened or not. Of course, more effort should be concentrated on those who show an interest and who are prepared to accept the truth.

☆ ☆

سورة الذّٰريٰت

Makkan	Surah Adh-Dhariyat	Verses 60

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالذَّٰرِيَٰتِ ذَرْوًا (1) فَالْحَٰمِلَٰتِ وِقْرًا (2) فَالْجَٰرِيَٰتِ يُسْرًا (3) فَالْمُقَسِّمَٰتِ أَمْرًا (4) إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَصَادِقٌ (5) وَإِنَّ الدِّينَ لَوَٰقِعٌ (6) وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْحُبُكِ (7) إِنَّكُمْ لَفِي قَوْلٍ مُّخْتَلِفٍ (8) يُؤْفَكُ عَنْهُ مَنْ أُفِكَ (9) قُتِلَ الْخَرَّٰصُونَ (10) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ سَاهُونَ (11) يَسْـَٔلُونَ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الدِّينِ (12) يَوْمَ هُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ يُفْتَنُونَ (13) ذُوقُوا فِتْنَتَكُمْ هَٰذَا الَّذِي كُنتُم بِهِۦ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ (14)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Most Merciful.

(1) By the oath of the winds that disperse (dust, clouds etc. .... (2) And by the clouds that bear heavy burdens... (3) And by the ships that move smoothly... (4) And by those angels who distribute things... (5) Indeed what you have been promised is undoubtedly true... (6) And retribution will undoubtedly take place. (7) By the oath of the sky in which there are roads... (8) You people are definitely varied in talks. (9) Turned away from it is he who is prone to turning away. (10) May the conjecturers be destroyed... (11) ...those who are lost in their ignorance. (12) They ask, "When will the day of retribution be?" (13) The day when they will be punished in the Fire. (14) "Taste your punishment! This is that which you sought to hasten."

JUDGMENT DAY IS A CERTAINTY, WHEN THE REJECTERS WILL BE CAST INTO HELL

Allāh begins this Surah by swearing oaths *"By the winds that disperse", "the clouds that bear heavy burdens", "the ships that move smoothly"* and *"those angels who distribute things."* Allāh takes oaths by all these things to emphasise the fact that *"Indeed what you have been promised is undoubtedly true and retribution (for deeds i.e. Judgment day) will undoubtedly take place."* Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه have both explained the meanings of these verses as mentioned above.

The oaths have been taken by angels who live in the heavens, clouds that occupy the sky, winds that blow between the sky and earth and ships that travel on oceans and rivers. A person who has knowledge of these things and who ponders deeply about them will realise that the Creator of these phenomena is most certainly Capable of resurrecting creation on the Day of Judgment.

Allāh then takes other oaths when He says, *"By the oath of the sky in which there are roads (which the angels use). You people are definitely varied in talks. Turned away from it is he who is prone to turning away."* While some people accept the advent of Judgment, others deny it. Those who refuse to accept the truth are deprived of all good. They will deny the advent of Judgment because their nature is such that they are prone to turning a blind eye to the truth.

"May the conjecturers be destroyed; those who are lost in their ignorance." Despite the truth of the Qur'ān being present before such people, their ignorance bars them from reflecting on the issues raised in the Qur'ān. Rather than follow the facts, they continue to speculate and say whatever they please.

"They ask, 'When will the day of retribution be?' The day when they will be punished in the Fire. (And they will be told) *'Taste your punishment! This is that which you sought to hasten.* "'In the world, these people kept asking when will Judgment day take place. When it does occur and they receive their punishment, they will be reminded of the pretentiousness impatience.

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ (15) ءَاخِذِينَ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَبْلَ ذَٰلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ (16)
كَانُوا۟ قَلِيلًا مِّنَ ٱلَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ (17) وَبِٱلْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ (18) وَفِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّآئِلِ
وَٱلْمَحْرُومِ (19)

(15) Verily the abstinent ones shall be in gardens and springs... (16) ... receiving what their Lord confers on them. Indeed these people used to carry out good deeds before. (17) Little was it that they slept at night. (18) During the closing portions of the night they would be seeking forgiveness (from Allāh). (19) There was always a portion of their wealth (reserved) for beggars and deprived people.

THE REWARDS OF THE PIOUS

After describing the plight of the sinners and disbelievers, Allāh speaks about the pious believers. Allāh says, *"Verily the abstinent ones shall be (enjoying themselves) in gardens and springs, (happily) receiving what their Lord confers on them."* These people obviously shunned evil and sin, because of which they are called *"the abstinent ones"*. In addition to this, they also *"used to carry out good deeds"* in a most befitting manner. It is on this account that they have also been termed *"Muhsinīn"*. Among their good deeds, some of the most sterling ones are mentioned. Allāh praises them when He says, *"Little was it that they slept at night."* While others were sleeping soundly, these pious servants stayed awake to engage in Allāh's worship.

These people do not boast to others about their worship and notwithstanding the excellent quality of their Ibādah (worship), they never fail to seek Allāh's forgiveness for any shortcomings in their Ibādah. Allāh says, *"During the closing portions of the night they would be seeking forgiveness (from Allāh)."* It is the habit of people of Belief that they always make Istighfār (seek Allāh's forgiveness) after their Ibādah so as to compensate for any imperfections.

After speaking of the physical acts of worship that these people engage in, Allāh then mentions that they also carry out monetary acts of worship. Allāh says, *"There was always a portion of their wealth (reserved) for beggars and deprived people."* They are so meticulous about charity that they regard it to be a bounden duty.

Who are the *"deprived people"*? Some commentators mention that "deprived people" refers to the opposite of beggars i.e. people who do not ask from others. Such people are said to be "deprived" because people are unaware of their plight and they do not make it known. As a result, people do not think of them when giving charity.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The needy person is not he who goes begging from door to door, who will be satisfied with one or two morsels or dates. The real needy person is he who has nothing to gratify himself and none are aware of his need because he does not beg. [*Bukhari v. 1*]

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the *"deprived person" is* the person who makes an effort to earn, but the things of the world evade him all the time. Despite this, he still does not ask from others. Sayyidina Zayd bin Aslam رحمة الله عليه says that *"the deprived person"* is he whose crops have all been destroyed. Others state that he is that person whose animals have all been destroyed when they were his only means of earning. Allāh knows best.

(20) In the earth are signs for those who have conviction... (21) ...And within your own selves as well. Do you not see? (22) In the sky is your sustenance and what you have been promised. (23) By the Lord of the sky and the earth, this is certainly the truth just as you can speak.

ALLĀH'S SIGNS ON EARTH AND IN THE HUMAN BODY

Allāh speaks of His powers to create and to sustain. Allāh says, *"In the earth are signs for those who have conviction and within your own selves as well. Do you not see?"* When a person ponders about Allāh's creation on earth and about the wonders of his own body, he will certainly realise that Allāh has the power to resurrect people on the Day of Judgment. One will realise that the Being who has the tremendous powers to create all of this from nothing and to sustain and

maintain it, must definitely have the power to resurrect.

This subject matter is referred to in the following verses:

"From His signs also, is that you see the earth bare. Then, when We send rain upon it, it begins to stir and flourish. Verily, the One Who gave life to it is the One Who gives life to the dead. Indeed, He has power over all things." [*Surah HāMīm Sajdah (41), verse 39*]

"Was he (man) not a discharge of semen after which he developed into a clot of blood and then Allāh created him and perfected him? Then Allāh made the couple male and female. Does He then not have the power to resurrect the dead?" [*Surah Qiyamāh (75), verses 37 to 40*]

Allāh then continues to say, *'in the sky is your sustenance and what you have been promised."* Man's *"sustenance"* from the sky refers to the rain, which causes food to grow on earth. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه states that *"what you have been promised"* refers to good and evil. Other commentators are of the opinion that it refers to rewards and punishment, both of which have been predetermined.

"By the Lord of the sky and the earth, this is certainly the truth just as you can speak." i.e. It is a certainty just as people are certain that they are speaking when they do speak. What is it that is *"certainly the truth"?* Commentators have tendered the following interpretations:

Man's sustenance.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

The Qur'ān.

Retribution.

Whatever has been discussed since the beginning of the Surah.

From these interpretations, the most appropriate is that the verse is referring to the truth of retribution i.e. rewards and punishment for deeds. This emphasises the advent of *"the day of retribution"*, which the disbelievers deny (as mentioned in verse 12 above).

NOTE : The last seven verses of this Pāra (juz) have been included in the next Para to facilitate easier understanding of the commentary because the verses are linked.

GLOSSARY

This glossary gives only a breef, introductory meaning of each word and is by no means an authentic dictionary or a full explanation. The meanings given are exactly what the translator has given in the text except for one or two cases here and there.

اعوذ باللّٰه من الشيطان الرجيم: *(a'udhu billahi minash shaytanir rajim)* I seek refuge in *Allah* from the accursed devil)

انا للّٰه و انا اليه راجعون: *(inna lillahi wa inna ilahi raji'un)* see *istarja'*

(رحمه اللّٰه): May *Allah* show mercy to him

(رحمة اللّٰه عليه): May *Allah* have mercy on him

(رضى اللّٰه عنه): May *Allah* be pleased with him

(صلى اللّٰه عليه وسلم): May *Allah* bless him and give him peace

(عليه السلام): May peace be hon him
ان الحمد والنعمة لک والملک لا شریک لک
لبیک اللّٰهم لبیک ، لبیک لا شریک لک لبیک

a'raf,al: the heights, the parapets

aafiyah: safety, goof health and well-being

aal Imran: (the) family of Imran

aalam: all the world, universe

aalamin: universe, all creation

adal: justice, moderation

adhan: the call to prayer, five times a day

ahbar: learned Jewish scholars

ahl suffah: see *ashabus suffah*

ahlul Kitab: people of the Book

ahqab: (pl. of hiqb, q.v)

ajda: a devilish name one whose nose and ears are cut off.

akhirah: hereafter

alam arwah: world of the souls

alastu: (الست) refers to the pledge *Allah* took from all the souls (Am I not your Lord) al-A'raf, 172

alim: singular of *ulama*

amin (pronounced aamin): (exclamation after a prayer meaning) do answer, O *Allah*, let it be so, accept our prayer.

amr bilma'ruf: enjoining the reputable

an'am, al: the quadrapeds

anbiyah: Pl. of *nabi*

anfal, al: the spoils of war. This word *anfal* is the plural of *nafl* (meaning, 'something extra') and anything more than the obligatory is *nafl*. A believer fights for *Allah's* sake, not for the booty. Hence, when he gets the booty, it is *anfal*.

anfal: booty gained after battle

ansar: supporters who welcomed the *muhajirs* from Makkah

aqd: pledge

asabat: tribes

asbat: successors, grandsons children of (Prophet) Ishaq

ashab us suffah: about 300 poor immigrants who lived on a raised platform in *Masjid Nabawi* devoted to acquiring knowledge and participating in *jihad*

ashab: same as *sahabah*

ashabul faraid: 'people of inheritance,' those liable to receive their shares of inheritance

ashara mubashshara: ten people who were give glad tidings of Paradise

ashura:	10th of *Muharram*
asr:	afternoon *(salah)*
aurah:	that which the *Shari'ah* has called for being concealed, the intimate parts
awliya:	(pl. of wali)
awsat mufassal:	are the *surah* from *at-Tariq(86)* to *al-Bayyinah(98)*
ayah (Pl. ayat):	sign, verse (of the Quran)
ayat ul Kursi:	verse 255 of al-Baqarah
Aws:	tribe of Madinah
Azazil:	name of Iblis
ba'in (talaq):	irrevocable divorce
badanah:	large animal, (camels and cattles)
bahirah (بحيرة):	a she-camel whose ear was slit by pagan Arabs with supertitions minds
bahirah:	the she camel whose ear was cut off when she delivered five foals, the fifth being a male, so that she may not be slaughtered or mounted but allowed to roam about freely. But, *Qatadah* said that the fifth should be a female to allow the distinction
baitul izzah:	*Allah's* House on the first heaven, House of honour
baqarah, al:	the cow
bara'ah:	exoneration
barakah:	abundant good, blessing
basmalah:	بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم *(Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim)* In the name of *Allah* the Beneficent, the Most Merciful)
bayt ul-Ma'mur:	a place beneath *Allah's* throne where angels perform *tawaf*
bid:	13th, 14th, 15th of each lunar month when it is rewarding to fast
budn:	pl. of badanah
buraq:	an animal larger than a donkey and smaller than a horse travelling at speed of lightning. The Prophet ﷺ rode it to the heavens
buruj:	stars; (twelve signs of the zodiac)
Bakht Nasr:	Nebuchadnezar
Bakkah:	another name for Makkah
Bani (or Banu) Isra'il:	children of Isra'il
Bid'ah:	innovation in religion
dajjal:	antichrist
darul harb:	enemy territory
dawn:	penalty
dhabih:	the one offered as sacrifice, Isma'il عليه السلام
dhakirin:	those who engage in *dhikr*
dhamil arham:	maternal relatives, blood relatives
dhamil qurba:	relatives
dhann:	assumption, dreams of other people
dhimmi:	non-Muslim living in Islamic state under protection
dhul Khalsa:	an idol regarded as the Ka'bah of Yeman, pulled down by Jarir bin Abdullah Bajali رضي الله عنه
din:	religion
diyah:	blood money
diyah:	bloodhit, blood money
du'a:	prayer, supplication, call
dubur:	west/wind
durud:	invocating blessing on the Prophet
eela:	oath not to approach one's wife for an unspecified

	time
eid (eed):	festival
eid ul adha:	festival on 10th Dhul Hajjah when a sacrifice is made marking that of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام
eid ul fitr:	festival marking end of Ramadan when *salah* is offered and before that *sadaqah al-fitr* is paid to the poor.
fa'i:	war booty gained without fighting
fajr:	dawn *(salah)*
fard:	absolutely obligatory, undeniable
fasiq (pl. fasiqun):	disobedient, transgressor, rebellious
fasiq:	open sinner
fatil:	wick a small skin in the cleft of a date stone anything very insignificant.
fatir:	creator, originator
fatrah:	period during which no Prophet or Messenger was sent
fatwa:	ruling on a religious issue
fatwa:	rulings on religions matters given by jurists
fayyi:	booty received by Muslims from disbelievers after a truce, without any fighting
fidyah:	expiation, atonement
fitrah:	nature, moral constitution
furqan:	discerner, that which differentiates
furqan:	discriminator, what distinguishes
fusuq:	sin
Fatihah:	opening
Fir'awn:	Pharaoh
ghamus:	false assertion of having done something in the past.
ghanima:	booty gained after battle
ghislin:	filth from the wounds of inmates of Hell
ghulu:	excesses, exaggeration (in religion)
haddul qadhaf:	punishment for defaming someones accusing him/her of adultery
hadith (pl. ahadith):	Prophet's ﷺ tradition
hady:	animal of sacrifice brought by pilgrim
haidh:	menstruation
hajj akbar:	*Hajj* itself
hajj al badl:	hajj performed on behalf of another
hajj asghar:	the *umrah*
hajr aswad:	The Black Stone
halal:	lawful, permitted
halal:	lawful, permitted
hama/ham/hami:	a she camel dedicated to idols by pagan Arabs
haram:	unlawful, forbidden, sacred
haram:	unlawful, forbidden, sacred
hasur:	chaste, abstaining from women, celibate
hawariyyin:	disciples of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام
hidayah:	guidance
hijab:	covering, veil
hijrah:	migration, migration to Madinah
hiqb:	an extreamly long period of time; eighty years each day of which is like a thousand years of this world
hubal:	an idol of the Makkans whose slogan Abu Sufyan raised at the *Uhud*
hudhud:	hoopoe

hullf (حلف):	agreement to assist one another in some matters
hur ayn:	large eyed maidens of Paradise
hur:	maidens of Paradise, (beautiful and fair)
Hajj:	annual pilgrimage which is obligatory on those who can perform it once in lifetime, involving visit to *Makkah, Mina, Arafat* and *Muzdalifah* (and *Madinah*).
Ham:	The stud camel whose 'grandson' impregnated a female, so it gained freedom. Or the stud camel who impregnated female camels ten times. It was set free
Harut/Marut:	two angels sent to try men
i'tikaf:	seclusion for worship - men do it in the mosque while women observe it at home
iblis:	a name of the devil
ibnus sabil:	traveller
iddah:	waiting period for a woman who is divorced or widowed before she may remarry.
iddah:	waiting period of woman who is divorced or widowed
iddah:	waiting period of woman who is divorced or widowed before she may remarry.
ifrad:	assuming *ihram* for only *hajj*
ihram:	every pilgrim must assume the *ihram* which makes certain lawful things unlawful to him and calls upon him to don particular dress.
ihsan:	be kind, do in a beautiful way
ihsar:	prevented from making pilgrimage
ijma:	congensus of opinion
ila(ella):	an oath by a husband that he will not have sexual intercourse with his wives
ilham:	inspiration in the heart
illiyyin:	a place above seven heaveans where souls of believers reside
ilm:	knowledge
iman:	faith, belief
insha Allah:	if *Allah* will
insha Allah:	if *Allah* will. This phrase is added everytime one speaks of doing something in future
ira'ahit tariq:	guidance by pointing out the path
irtidad:	apostacy
isal ilal matlub:	delivering to the exact destination
isal thawab:	consigning reward to another person of one's pious deeds
isha:	night *(salah)*
islah:	reformation, correction
isra:	night journey
istabraq:	fine silk
istarja:	to say انا لله و انا اليه راجعون (to *Allah* we belong and to Him is our return) when faced with difficulty or on loss of a dear one.
istidraj:	respite given *Allah* before He seizes finally when the sinner commits sin boldly, step by step, bringing the infidel to hell by degrees
istighfar:	to seek forgiveness of *Allah*
istikhara:	a prayer to get *Allah*'s guidance on some issue of concern
Isra'il (Prophet):	Yaqub عليه السلام
jahannum:	Hell

jamarah (jamarat): three pillars marking the site where the devil tries to tempt Ismail عليه السلام
jamarah kubra: the last *jamarah*
jamarah ula: the first *jamarah*
jamarah wusta: the middle *jamarah*
janazah salah: funeral prayer
janazah: funeral
jazakAllah: may *Allah* reward you, may *Allah* give you recompense
jibt: idols, name of an idol
jihad: to fight in Allah's cause
Jannah: Paradise
Jizya: tax imposed by Islam an non-Muslims offering them protection
kaffarah: expiation
kashf: a form of Divine inspiration
khums: one-fifth (of booty)
kufr amali: disbelief in deeds
Ka'bah: cube, the building in the centre of the sacred mosque in Makkah around which pilgrims circumambulate, and which worshippers face in their *salah*.
Kaffarah: expiation
Kafir: disbeliever, infidel
Kalalah: a dead person who leaves neither father nor son but a brother or a sister
Karamah: a wonder
Kawthar: the Prophet's pond in the hereafter at which he stand and only the truly pious will be allowed to drink so that they will never feel thirsty
Khalil: friend
Kharaj: a tribute on land
Khazraj: tribe of Madinah
Khula: divorce given by a husband on his wife's initiative
Khulafa (s. Khalifah): Caliphs
Khulafa Rashidun: righteous caliphs
Khutbah: sermon
Kiraman Katibin: angels who record a person's deeds/words
Kitabah: a slave's agreement to buy his own freedom from his master through regular payments
Kuffar: (pl. of *Kafir*)
Kufr: disbelief, to conceal (truth)
Kun (كن): 'Be,' when *Allah* intends anything, He says *Kun* and it is.
la'n: curse
laat: a generous man Amir bin Zarb who fed travellers and was a judge. When he died Amr bin Luhay, made an idol of him. It was pulled down by Abu Sufya bin Harband رضي الله عنه Mughira bin Shibah رضي الله عنه
labayk: the pilgrim recites after assuming the *ihram*
laghw: futile, oath, meaningless, vain
laylatul qadar: the night of power which is the night in *Ramadan* when the Qur'an was revealed
lia'n: a couple who invoke *Allah's* curese on each other when the husband accuses his wife of immorality and she denies
lowhul mahfuz: preserved tablet
Laylatul jinn: the night when the *jinn* listened to the Qur'an and the

	Prophet's ﷺ sermon
ma'idah, al:	the tablespread
mabrur:	sinless
mahr mithal:	dower (customary or) in force in the family
mahr:	dower
mahram:	a near relative with whom it is unlawful to marry, one with whom it is always unlawful to marry
makruh tahrimi:	disapproved almost to the point of unlawfulness
makruh tahzihi:	disliked in order to purify, withdraw out of *taqwa*, abstain
makruh:	disliked, reprehensible, not approved
manasik:	rites of *hajj*
maqamul Mahmud:	praisworthy station
mashwarah:	consultation
masjid:	mosque
mathani:	the *surahs* from *surah Yunus* to *al-Hujrat*
mawdihatul hasanah:	beautiful exhortations
mawlal mawalat:	two people made a contract to help pay one another's penalty, if any, and to inherit from one another, each of these was so called
maytah:	carrion, animals that die a natural death
mi'raj:	ascension to the heavens
mihrab:	sanctuary, place of worship, a riche in the mosque (for the imam), a place of battle (like against the devil)
mirain:	*Surahs* that contain a little more than a hundred verses
miswak:	a fine tuig for brushing teeth
mu'allaq:	an attached vow
mu'anaqa:	to embrace
mu'awwadhatayn:	last two surahs of the Qur'an al-Falaq and an-Nas
muadhdhin:	one who calls the *adhan*
mubahalah:	two or more opposing parties invoke curse on the wrongdoer.
mufassal:	the *surahs* from *Qaf(50)* to the end of the Quran are socalled
mufrid:	who performs *ifrad hajj*
mufti:	jurisprudent, scholar who is eligiable to give religions rulings *(fatwa)*
muhaddith (pl. muhaddithin):	scholar of *hadith*
muhajir (muhajirun/muhajrin):	emigrants
muharramat abadiyah:	women whom a man can never marry
muharramat musaharah:	women whom a man cannot marry because of marriage ties
muharramat nasabiyah:	women whom a man cannot marry because of close relationship
muharramat rada'iyyah:	women whom a man cannot marry because of suckling
muhkamat:	clear, comprehensive verses of the Qur'an
muhsin:	a Muslim adult, free, married person who has consumated his or her marriage. If any of them commits, adultery then he or she must be stoned to death
muhsir:	one who is prevented
mujahadah:	stuggle between two; thus a persons struggle against his carnal self to better his hereafter
mujahid:	warrior
mulhid:	athiest, disbeliever

munadi: one who calls out loudly, proclaimer, herald
munafiq: hypocrite
munafiqun: pl. of *munafiq*
munajat: quiet supplication to *Allah*
muqantarah: huge proportions
muqatta'at, huruf: abbreviated letters like (الم *alif laam meem*) in the first verse of 29 *surah*
muqtadi: one who follows the *iman* in *salah*
murtad: apostate
murtahin: receiver
musafaha: to shake hands
musafir: traveller
mustahab: desirable, recommended, that which was observed by the Prophet ﷺ sometimes and omitted sometimes.
mut'ah: temporary marriage
mutashabihat: allegorical verses of the Qur'an whose meaning is known to *Allah* alone, example: 'The Most Merciful is firm on the throne' (surah TaHa, 5)
mutashabihat: allegorical, figurative, co-similar, difficult to fathom.
mutlaq: a genaral vow
muttaqin (pl. of muttaqi): those who fear *Allah*, who observe *taqwa*
muttaqin: abstinent, pious those who fear *Allah*
muwahhid: a monotheist
Ma'ruf: righteousness reputable
Maghrib: sunset (*salah* after)
Manat: Banu Hudhayl and Banu Khuza'ah made this idol and made offering to it as a means of nearness to *Allah*
Manna: *Allah's* blessing sent to *Banu Isra'il* like white sugar, with *salwa*
Maqam Ibrahim: Station of Ibrahim, عليه السلام the rock on which he stood while building the *Ka'ba*
Maqam ul Mahmud: the praiseworthy station
Maryam: worshipper (against verse 37 Aal Imran), mother of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام
Mash'arul Haram: where rites of *hajj* are performed at *Muzdalifah*
Mu'min (Pl. mu'minun): believer
Mubahalah: invoking curse on the apposing party who is said to be the wrong-doer, mutual imprecation
Mukatab: slave who enters into a Kitabah
Mukatabah: same as Kitabah
Mun'aqida: promise to do or not do something in the future
Munkar: rejected, disreputable
Mushrik (Pl. mushrikun): polytheist
Mutawatir (ah): continuously handed down
Muttatu: who perfroms *tamattu hajj*
naat: poem in prise of the Prophet ﷺ
nabi: Prophet
nabi: a Prophet with no new *Shari'ah* or Book
nabuwah: Prophethood
nafkh: breath (of Jibril)
nafl: optional
nafs: base self
nahi an almunkar: forbid the disreputable
najashi: negus, the king of Abyssinia/Ethiopia
najwa: secret meeting

naml: ants
nasara: christians
nasran: same as *nasara*
nasrani: singular of *nasara/nasran*
nazghun: temptation
nifaq: hypocrisy
night of qadr: see *laylatul qadr*
nisa, an: the women
nisab: the amount of gold, silver, currency, wealth or property that attracts payment of *zakah*
nisab: the minimum property or wealth that attracts payment of *zakah*
noqir: tiny spot on a date pit; something very insignificant.
nur: light
Nahl-an: the bee
Nijr-Al: capital city of the *Thamud*
Paraclete: one who people praise exceedingly (which is Muhammad in Arabic)
qada: lapse, missing a fard and making up later.
qarin: who performs *qiran hajj*
qasas: story
qati: clear commands in dreams
qawa'id: old women who remain indvors and past age of marriage
qibla: the direction (of the *Ka'ba*) which worshippers face in their *salah*
qiran: assuming *ihram* for both *umrah* and *hajj*, performing the *umrah* but not giving up the ihram, and after performing hajj, when due, shaving head and discarding the *ihram*
qisar mufassal: the *surah* from *az-Zilzal(99)* to *an-Nas(114)* are so called
qisas" retaliation
qitmir: pellice, date stone, anything on no value
qunut: stand in humility
Qasr (salah): shortened *salah*
Qintar: large wealth, 42,000 ooqiya or 4,80,000 dirhams
Qiyamah: Day of Resurrection
ra'd: thunder
rabb (Pl. arbab): Lord
rabbaniyun: those of *Allah*, who are attached to *Allah*
rabitu: attach to a task dedicatedly, preparing beast for battle, guarding borders of Islamic state
rahn: pledge
raj'i (talaq): revocable divorce
rajam: stoning married adulterer to death
rami: pelting stones at the *jamarat*
rasul: Messenger
rasul: messenger who is a Prophet with a new *Shari'ah* and a new Book
rawafid: the *shias*
rayhan: nourishment, fragrant plants, flowers sustenance
risalat: messengership, office of a Messenger
ruh: spirit, mercy (commentary on verse 170/171 surah Nisa), inspiration
ruku': bowing posture in the *salah*

Rahim, ar:	The most merciful, (attribute of *Allah*)
Rahman ar:	The Beneficent, The Merciful (attribute of *Allah*)
Ruhul Qudus:	appelation of Jibril ﷺ
saba:	wind that blows from east to west
sabian:	(1) worshippers of angels (2) fire-worshippers who were also Jews and Christians (3) had no religion but believed in *Allah*
sabr:	patience
sadaqah:	charity
sadaqatul fitr:	charity given after end of the month of fasting (Ramadan)
sadhu:	Hindu ascetic
saff:	row
sajdah:	prostration
salam:	greeting
salatul duha:	optional *salah* after sunrise
salatul fath:	optional *salah* on gaining victory
salatul khawf:	*salah* performed while in fear
salatul wusta:	the *salah* between others, midmost *salah*
salihin:	righteous
salihun (pl. of salih):	righteous
sayyidut-tabi'in:	a title of Uwais Qarni given to him by the Prophet ﷺ for, though he embraced Islam in his times, he could not meet him because he tended to his ailing mother
shafa 'atul uzma:	the great intercession for everyone
shafi:	cure
shafiyah:	cure
shahid:	martyr, witness
shirk:	polytheism
shuhada:	Pl. of *shahid*
shukr:	gratitude
sidratul muntaha:	a lotus or jujube tree over the seventh heaven near Paradise at the limit beyond which is nothing
sijjin:	a place beneath seven earths where souls of disbelievers are kept
siqayatul hajj:	providing water to the pilgrims
sirat:	a very narrow, slippery bridge over hell which the believers will cross over swifty but the infidesls will fall into hell
siratul mustaqim:	the right path
siwak:	see *miswak*
sunnah:	practice of the Prophet ﷺ
sa'ibah (سايبة):	a slave or an animal set free for the sake of an idol
sa'iqah:	thunderclap, lightning bolt
sab'u tiwal:	the lengthy *surahs* in the begining after *al-Fatihah* - from *al-Baqarah* to *at-Taubah* or *Bara'a*
Sa'i (سعی):	the seven rounds between *Safa* and *Marwah*, the two hillocks, by the pilgrims.
Sa'ibah:	If a camel bore ten foals she qualified for exemption from work and from being milked. Her hair was cut off to mark her. But some said that it was a camel dedicated to an idol and the custodian slaughtered her and gave its meat away
Sabt:	Sabbath
Sadanatul bayt:	to unlock and lock the door of the *Ka'bah*
Saffat, as:	The rangers, the angels
Sahabah:	companions of the Prophet ﷺ (pl. of *sahabi*)

Sahabi:	s. of *sahabah*
Sahifah:	scriptures in a smaller form
Salah:	regular prayer, form of worship made up of different postures and recitals, physical worship, also invoking blessing on the Prophet ﷺ
Salwa:	*Allah's* blessing to *Banu Isra'il,* quails
Sha'air (شعائر) (pl of شاعرة sha'irah):	Signs, to kens
Shari'ah:	Islamic law as prescribed by the *Qur'an* and the *hadith,* the way the religion is observed.
Shaybi:	custodian of the keys of the *Ka'bah*
Shaytan:	Satan, the devil
Shuh:	riggardliness
Siddiqun (Siddiqin):	truthful
Sirat ul mustaqim:	straight path
Sufiyah:	*sufis,* mystics
Sundus:	fine silk
Surah (Pl. Suwar):	Chapter (of the Quran)
Taybah:	another name of Madinah
ta'awwudh:	seeking refuge in *Allah* in the words
tabi'un/tabi'in (s. tabi'i):	successors of the *sahabah,* ؓ epigones
tafaqqu:	attain deep understanding of religion
tafsir birra'iy:	interpretation based on own opinion
tafsir:	commentary, explanation, interpretation
taghabun:	mutual loss and gain
tahajjud (salah):	*Salah* offered voluntarily in the dead of the night when others are asleep
tahiyyah:	greeting, prayer, *salam*
tahlil (تحليل):	to make lawful
tahlil (تهليل):	to say *La ilaha illAllah*
tahmid:	praise of *Allah*
tajwid:	science of recital of the *Qur'an* with correct articulation and punctuation.
takbir (pl. takbirat):	to say *Allahu Akbar*
talaq:	divoce given by a husband to his wife on his own
talaq:	divorce
talbiyah:	reciting *labayk* during pilgrimage
tamattu:	assuming *ihram* for *umrah* during months of *hajj* and having performed it, assuming *ihram* for *hajj* on the 8th of Dhul Hajjah
tanfil:	proclamation that warriors may retain to themselves whatever booty they acquire, the booty being called *nafl.*
taqdir:	fate, Divine decree
taqiyya:	expression of what one really disagrees with, lying in religion - a shi'a belief
taqwa:	righteousness, a God-fearing attitude
tariqah:	a path, religious life as seen by the *sufis*
tasawwuf:	sufism mysticism, intense love of *Allah* and the Prophet ﷺ, and obedience to them
tasbih:	to glorify *Allah*
tashahhud:	at-tahiyyat recited in the sitting posture in salah and forms the words recited during the mi'raj
tasmiyyah:	to recite the basmalah
taubah:	repentance
taubah:	repentance
taught:	rebellious conduct, false god, idol

tawaf:	circum ambulation of the *Ka'ba*
tawaffa:	to raise souls, to lift something completely, to put something to sleep, to grant death to someone
tawakkul:	trust in *Allah*
tawhid:	oneness of *Allah*, monotheism
tayammum:	dry ablution when water is unavailable or use of it is harmful
tiwal mufassal:	are the *surah* from *Qaf(50)* to *al-Buruj(85)*
tuhr:	purity apposite of menstruation
Ulama:	Scholars (of religion)
Umrah:	Optional pilgrimage of a lesser nature.
umm:	Mother, chief
ummah (Pl. umam):	Community, followers/people of a Prophet.
ummul qura (mother of all villages):	a name of Makkah
uququl walidain:	disobedience to parents and causing them grief and hardship
ushr:	a tenth, payable on produce
uzza:	a female devil who visited three accacia trees in Batn Nakhla, an idol carved by Zalim bin As'ad, destroyed by Khalid bin Walid ﷺ
wahy:	to cost into the heart, to reveal, to inspire
wajib:	obligatory to a degree lesser than *fard*
wali:	friend of *Allah*, man of *Allah*
wali:	friend, helper
wasata:	best, just, reliable
wasilah (وصيلة):	a female animal (camel or ewe) honoured to the idols by observing some superstition
wasilah:	It was a goat that bore seven kids. Only males could use her and upon her death, both males and females ate from her carcos
wassiyah:	bequest
wazifah:	rota of recital, remembrance, supplication
wird:	rota of recital, remembrance, supplication
wudu:	ablution to gain purity (before offering *salah* for instance)
Yahud:	name of Jews because they repented from calf worship
Yathrib:	original name of Madinah
yasin:	O men! A name of the Prophet ﷺ
yastambituna:	'People with insight' but literally 'to extract water from the depths of the earth,' hence, those who can unearth the truth
yamin:	oath
yaqin:	conviction
Zamzam:	a well in *Makkah* of incessant water of *zamzam*, discovered by Abdul Muttalib and originally scraped by an angel for Prophet Isma'il ﷺ
Zaqqum:	a bitter tree in hell
Zuhr:	midday *(salah)*
Zulumat (pl.):	darkness, falsehood
zakah:	charity prescribed at a certain rate on those holding a certain amount of assets called *nisab*, worship of financial form
zihar:	telling one's wife, "You are to me like my Mother's back

INDEXES

There are three different sets of index, an index of names appearing in the commentary, an index of subjects in the commentary, and, an index of books to which the commentary refers but the major books of hadith like Bukhari, Muslim, etc. are not mentioned. The numbers against each entry refer to the pages and an 'f' following a number implies that the entry is repeated on that page or up to five following pages.

INDEX OF NAMES

A

B

D

F

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

Q

R

S

INDEX OF SUBJECTS

INDEX OF BOOKS

Anwar ul-Bayan

Mawlana Ashiq Ilahi Bulandshahri رحمة الله عليه is a renowned, recognised religious authority. He was a prolific writer and there are a number of books to his credit covering a wide range of religious subjects. His commentary on the Qur'an, Anwarul ul-Bayan, speaks highly of his deep knowledge and learning. He has written an exhaustive commentary on each surah of the Qur'an – nay on every ruku' or section and quoted earlier authorities. His work is interspersed with the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sayings and with interpretations of the learned *sahabah* رضي الله عنهم اجمعين like Sayyidina Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, Ali ibn Abu Talib رضي الله عنه and Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه and the notable *tabi'in* like Abdullah Ibn Mubarak رحمة الله عليه, Hasan Busri رحمة الله عليه, etc.

He has explained the Qur'an by the Qur'an itself and by the ahadith and then by the opinion of recognised exegates. He has not hesitated in recounting historical events and related episodes and has drawn conclusions and rulings therefrom.

In supervision of Mufti Afzal Hussain Ilyas a team of translators has rendered the Urdu commentary into lucid and easy-to-understand English. He has not failed to explain Arabic terminology with its corresponding English word in paranthesis. He has also given apt headings and sub-headings of chapters and paragraphs. This commentary is a valuable addition to Islamic literature.

Darul-Ishaat has published this commentary with the permission of Mawlana Ashiq Ilahi رحمة الله عليه and Mawlana Ilyas. A comprehensive glossary in the five volumes and indices of subjects and names at the end of each volume are included.

E-mail: ishaat@pk.netsolir.com
ishaat@cyber.net.pk